

Baptist and Reflector

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Newsjournal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention

Task Force moves ahead with construction plans

Tennessee Baptists' Program, Planning, and Personnel Task Force has begun the process to select a contractor for construction of a conference center and renovation of the Baptist Building in Brentwood.

The Space Study Subcommittee has met with representatives of several Tennessee building companies. The objective, according to Task Force chairman James Porch, is to select from a group of five or six, a contractor for the project.

Additional time has been given bidding companies, he said, so that they can make accurate bids for "exactly what the project involves." Architects are meeting with the Space Study Subcommittee and the contractors. Gresham, Smith and Partners is the architectural firm selected by the Executive Board.

The additional time allowed to the building firms, said Porch, would be valuable since the architects have supplied additional information about the project's requirements. "However, this will not hamper the beginning of construction next spring," he said.

The Task Force, in reporting to messengers at the November Tennessee Baptist Convention, explained the Executive

Board's recommendations for building and renovating, reporting an estimated cost of \$4 million.

That figure, said Porch, is based on projections from the architects and comparative construction costs in the immediate area, and preliminary discussions with prospective contractors agree.

"We plan to fall within that estimate," he said. "Everything contractors have said thus far falls well within it."

The Task Force will meet Dec. 10 prior to the regular meeting of the Executive Board, and will meet with the Board later in the day.

A meeting is planned for mid-January to receive final guaranteed bids from contractors.

The building plans call for a conference center for meetings, seminars, and other needs, a building to house Baptist Foundation, Baptist Children's Homes, Baptist Adult Homes, Baptist and Reflector, and Woman's Missionary Union. The project includes renovation of the current building to make room for program restructure already reported by the Task Force, and to house current departments and offices.

Adrian Rogers seeks names for committee appointments

MEMPHIS (BP)— Adrian Rogers, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, is seeking recommendations of people to be nominated for key SBC committees.

In an open letter to Southern Baptists, Rogers wrote, "The important task of choosing the nominees for the 1988 Committee on Committees, Resolutions Committee, Credentials Committee, and Tellers Committee is under way."

As convention president, Rogers will appoint the key committees that will serve during the 1988 annual meeting, June 13-15, in San Antonio. He appoints the Committee on Committees and Resolutions Committee "in conference" with the two vice-presidents, the Credentials Committee "in consultation" with the vice-presidents, and the Tellers Committee "in consultation" with the SBC registration secretary.

The Committee on Committees names the Committee on Nominations, and any other committee not otherwise provided for. The Resolutions Committee processes and reports all resolutions submitted at the annual meeting. The Credentials Committee oversees registration. The

Tellers Committee is responsible for the tabulation of votes taken at the convention.

Rogers added in his open letter: "I am committed to choosing the very best Southern Baptists for these positions. This will be accomplished most effectively with your prayerful support and personal recommendations under the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

"We welcome recommendations from every corner of Southern Baptist work."

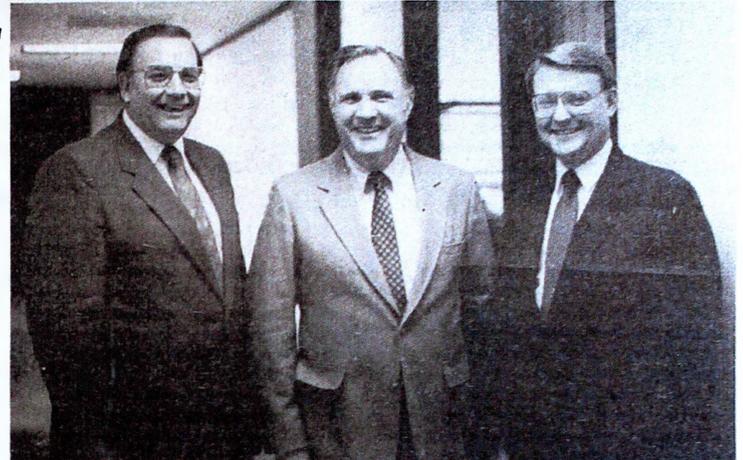
Rogers told Baptist Press: "I do not want to appoint anybody with an ax to grind. I want the people we appoint to be good representative Southern Baptists."

"I hope to appoint people who are firm in the faith and whose spirit and attitude is reflective of the spirit and the letter of the Peace Committee's report."

The president asked that all recommendations be sent to him personally at Bellevue Baptist Church, P.O. Box 40837, Memphis, TN 38174-0837. The envelope should be marked "SBC Committee Nominations."

Rogers asked that all nominations be sent to him on or before Feb. 1, 1988.

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BOARD OFFICERS — New officers of the Executive Board, Tennessee Baptist Convention, were in the Baptist Building recently for a Nominating Committee meeting. Elected at the organizational meeting during the TBC Annual Meeting, they are, from left, Murray Mathis, pastor of Third Church, Murfreesboro, vice-president; Carl Price, pastor of Lakewood Church, Nashville, secretary; and Dennis Pulley, pastor of First Church, Ripley, president.

State annual meetings reflect SBC politics

By Dan Martin and Marv Knox

NASHVILLE (BP)— Politics, SBC style, hit some of the state Baptist conventions during their annual meetings this fall.

Political activities, which have marked annual meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention for the past decade, were most apparent in four states — Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia, and Louisiana — where moderates and conservatives had direct confrontations.

In several other states, politics apparently played a part in elections and convention actions. In still others — particularly the newer-work areas of the convention — results were mixed.

Some observers said the results in the SBC are harder to assess since the "sides" are not quite as clear as in secular politics, where candidates declare their party loyalty prior to their elections. In some states, such as Texas, the candidate who won is studiously non-aligned, and in others, such as South Carolina, the new president declines and decries political labels.

While some secular news reports claim the results of the state conventions indicated the SBC is returning to a more centrist position, moderate leaders were more cautious. While some moderate leaders said they see the tide turning in the results from the state conventions, others urged caution, saying it is much too early to tell if the returns from

the states indicate a moderate resurgence.

Conservative leaders, while acknowledging defeats in several key states, take heart in victories in other places and said they turned out more conservative voters than ever before in several key states.

(Continued on page 3)

Associations back Shelby

Two Tennessee Baptist associations have acted in support of Shelby County Association's decision to disfellowship Prescott Memorial Church, Memphis, because it called a woman, Nancy Sehested, as pastor.

The executive committees of Chilhowee and Big Emory associations, in separate actions, approved motions to support Shelby County Association.

Chilhowee's motion said "... we, too, stand in opposition to women as deaconesses or pastors of our member churches ..." and commended Shelby County Association "... for its stand against a member church calling a woman as pastor."

Big Emory's motion expressed "... support and affirmation to the Shelby Baptist Association in the exercising of their right to exclude from their fellowship those churches which they consider to be unscriptural in practice and doctrine." Big Emory also affirmed the right of "each autonomous body to determine the basis for fellowship with the body."

Editorials

Pari-mutuel betting must be defeated

The issue of pari-mutuel betting at horse races is volatile and persistent. While voters have defeated efforts to make it legal in Davidson and Rutherford counties, it has been approved in Shelby County.

Lest we tire of the battle, Baptists need to remember that if gambling is bad for the county we live in — it is not good for other counties. It is not sufficient to rationalize that we are rid of gambling if we defeat it in our own communities.

Gambling is insidious, antithetical to Christian life, destructive to the individual and his victims, and hurts those who need the most help. Gambling does nothing for the community, despite irrational arguments by pro-gambling groups.

It is not enough for Baptists to talk in vague, half-baked derision. Gambling is not something to be joked about, or accepted because "some" peo-

ple want it. Gambling is not the child of a beautiful race track with graceful horses competing. It is evil because it teaches the "something for nothing," already prevalent, lifestyle without regard to the thousands who lose every bet they make.

The November 23 issue of the Nashville Tennessean said, "Many Middle Tennesseans oppose racetrack gambling for other than moral and religious reasons." The editorial "Saved from track betting again" added, "Racetracks have a reputation for attracting crime figures, and no public-minded person would want to create that kind of environment in this area." That is hitting the nail on the head!

It is also true that racing with betting would create problems with traffic, increased crime, additional work for police — all of which would increase the tax burden. Racing may be a sport of

kings — but we don't have many kings in Tennessee.

Reliable sources say that Williamson County's share of any revenue from a racetrack would be insufficient to pay for all the trouble caused. Williamson counties will vote on the pari-mutuel betting issue in a special referendum on December 8.

Should that county get a substantial vote against betting, it is possible that there will be efforts to repeal the state law that allows betting when approved by counties. A weak "no" vote would allow another referendum, perhaps soon.

When Tennesseans organized to support an anti-race track bill in 1904, one of the leaders was E. E. Folk, editor of the Baptist and Reflector. We are proud of his efforts. One bill was passed, then ruled unconstitutional by Tennessee's Supreme Court.

In supporting another anti-gambling bill in 1907, Governor John I. Cox, said "Race horse gambling is regarded as one of the most pernicious and dangerous species of gambling known to modern times. To me it is alarming, appalling, that at this day, the Christian people of this state permit to remain on their statute books a law authorizing, making legal, and recognizing this ruinous species of immorality. Why should a race-horse gambler be favored by our lawmakers and a crap shooter be sent to the penitentiary?" The bill became law.

Finally, it is urgent (and necessary) that Baptists in Williamson County continue to mobilize — and to vote against gambling on December 8. A large vote is needed. We must do more than offer half-hearted resistance to betting. We must be aware of the problems it causes, and ready to act positively for the welfare of family life and local communities.

Promises of dazzling racetracks and beautiful thoroughbreds and the chic set numb our senses. Enough! That is not a true picture of what racing-gambling does to a community. Enough! Pari-mutuel betting must be defeated. — WFA

Porter Routh — he walked tall

To say that Porter Wroe Routh stood tall in Southern Baptist life is an understatement. In truth, he walked tall.

He was always on the move — never content to sit around and wait for something to happen. He did not believe in knee-jerk responses. He was a man of action.

Porter Routh was born into a strong Baptist family; his father edited two Baptist state papers. *Though that strong heritage probably helped shape his path, he added all his gifts, including tenacity and enthusiasm, to build his reputation as "Mr. Baptist."*

That title was certainly not commonly used, but we could call him that and easily justify the reasons. Perhaps best known to Southern Baptists as executive secretary of the SBC Executive Committee for 28 years, he was also the convention's treasurer, had followed his father as editor of Oklahoma's Baptist Messenger, and had served in several other vital areas of SBC leadership.

As we said, Porter Routh walked tall.

Those who attended Executive Committee meetings through the years or who had other business with the committee, well remember the image of a big man — a tall man — a robust man, but also a compassionate man. Though he looked to be as big and rough as a bear, he was a picture of an old advertising slogan — "tough, but oh so gentle."

He was a deacon at his local church, moderator of Nashville Association, a moving force with Baptist World Alliance, in demand as speaker and lecturer at churches, colleges, and seminaries.

He was a loving and dedicated father and husband, a good citizen, a son and servant of the Lord Jesus.

When Porter Routh died last month, Southern Baptists and Tennessee Baptists lost a loyal friend and stalwart exponent of the Way. We will miss him — because he truly did walk tall among us. — WFA

Belmont hosts events for holidays

NASHVILLE — Belmont College has scheduled a series of holiday activities, including a special Christmas dinner, a presentation of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," and concerts.

Belmont Mansion, which was built in the 1850s, will be decorated for Christmas in Victorian style from Dec. 1-19.

The college will host a Family Christmas Buffet from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Dec. 6 and 13 in Founders Hall. The cost for adults is \$7.95; children 12 and under pay \$3.95. Reservations are needed and may be made at the college, 1900 Belmont Boulevard, Nashville 37212-3757.

Following the dinner, area church choirs, handbell choirs, and instrumental ensembles will present holiday music in the lobby of newly renovated Freeman Hall.

On Dec. 6 from 1-3 p.m., Belmont will have a reception to begin the month-long showing of the Hap Townes' art collection in Freeman Hall.

Also on Dec. 6, at 3 p.m., Belmont Mansion will host a performance of "A Christmas Carol" presented by the Belmont College drama department. Admission will be \$5.

Belmont's School of Music also has scheduled a Christmas carillon concert Dec. 20 and 24 at 4 p.m.

On Dec. 7, the School of Music's Oratorio Chorus will present "Gloria" by British composer John Rut-

ter and the Belmont College Orchestra will perform. The free concert, Christmas Festival VIII, will be at 8 p.m. in Massey Auditorium.

Canadian Baptists dedicate seminary

CALGARY, Alberta (BP) — Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary was dedicated during the third annual meeting of the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists Nov. 3-5 in Calgary.

Nearly 160 convention messengers also elected a convention president, adopted a philosophy of student ministry on 14 college campuses, and recognized the emergence of ministry to ethnics as a key part of Canadian Southern Baptist work.

The seminary dedication service was held in the newly completed main academic building on the 149-acre campus near Calgary. The 16,000-square-foot structure houses administrative and faculty offices, classrooms, a chapel, library, and lounge.

Classes started Sept. 1 with 20 students. Planned for the future are separate classroom and library buildings, a chapel, and a gymnasium.

Messengers elected Paul Johnson, pastor of First Baptist Church in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, as convention president. He succeeds Philip Yung, national consultant for Chinese ministry with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

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Charlie Warren Associate Editor
W. Fletcher Allen Editor
Connie Davis Assistant Editor

Baptist and Reflector

Mona Collett Church News Assistant
Donis Elliott Advertising
Rita Gambill Production Assistant

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News journal of Tennessee Baptist Convention
Tom Madden, Executive Secretary-Treasurer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Fred Isaacs, chairman; Paul Bryant, vice-chairman; Paul Barkley, David Drumel, Ray Fowler, Marshall Gupton, Calvin Harvell, Mrs. Richard Hawkins, James Hutson, Murray Mathis, Calvin Metcalf, Perry Michel, Jerry Oakley, Jere Plunk, Dennis Pulley, James Robertson, Lon Shoopman Jr., and Fred Steelman.

State meetings reflect SBC politics . . .

(Continued from page 1)

Moderates said they were energized by a series of actions in the months preceding the state conventions, actions which they rose up to beat down. Included in the moderate litany of grievances:

- The actions of the Southern Baptist Public Affairs Committee, a newly reconstituted group, which in August endorsed by a 7-5 vote the nomination of Robert H. Bork to be a justice on the U.S. Supreme Court, and later, in October, voted 8-4 to sever all institutional and financial ties with the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

- The shift in control of the board of trustees at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., which instituted new rules for the hiring of faculty, resulting in the resignations of President W. Randall Lolley and Dean Morris Ashcraft virtually on the eve of the state conventions.

- An attack on Mercer University, launched by Marietta, Ga., businessman Lee Roberts, who accused Mercer President R. Kirby Godsey of theological heresy and of permitting "drunkenness, immorality, and debauchery" on the school's Macon campus.

- The announcement that Jack Harwell, 20-year veteran editor of the *Christian Index*, newjournal of the Georgia Baptist Convention, was taking early retirement at age 55 because a review board set up to oversee the *Index* had threatened to fire him if he wrote one more editorial it considered unacceptable.

- An attempt to oust N. Larry Baker, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, during the

commission's September meeting. Baker, who was elected 16-13 last January, was under fire because his views on abortion, capital punishment, and women in ministry were not acceptable to conservative trustees. The effort to fire him failed on a 15-15 vote.

- The "disfellowshipping" of Prescott Memorial Baptist Church in Memphis by Shelby County Baptist Association, after the 236-member dually aligned congregation called a woman, Nancy Hastings Sehested, as pastor.

- A letter by a northern Virginia layman, T.C. Pinckney, which detailed conservative efforts to influence events in the Baptist General Association of Virginia. In the letter, retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Pinckney of Alexandria also categorized pastors as to whether the person "votes with us on controversial issues."

In Georgia, a record number of messengers defeated attempts to investigate charges against Mercer, adopted a motion deploring Roberts' mailout and gave Godsey a standing ovation.

Georgia messengers also dismissed the Index review board and asked Harwell to reconsider his decision to retire. He told a cheering, standing crowd he would accept their invitation to reconsider.

Georgia messengers, in a razor-thin vote, turned out incumbent President Clark Hutchinson, pastor of Eastside Church in Marietta, where Roberts teaches Sunday School, and elected moderate Jim Pitts, pastor of First Church of Valdosta.

In North Carolina, messengers expressed support and affirmation for the present administration, faculty, staff, and student body at Southeastern seminary.

Moderate candidate Leon Smith, pastor of First Baptist Church of Goldsboro, overwhelmingly defeated conservative candidate Ned Mathews, pastor of Parkwood Baptist Church in Gastonia. Lolley nominated Smith for the post.

In Virginia, messengers denounced conservative efforts to "disrupt our unity in diversity and establish one theological stance," in reference to Pinckney's letter.

Virginians also, for the first time in recent history, elected by acclamation Neal T. Jones, pastor of Columbia Church in Falls Church, a moderate. The presidency of the BGAV rotates between pastor and layperson, and generally in the year a clergyman serves, there are numerous nominations.

In Louisiana, moderate candidate Calvin Phelps, pastor of First Church of

Beech River honors 39-year service

The Beech River Baptist Association elected Ruth Carrington to be clerk/treasurer emeritus and acted to dedicate the annual minutes in her honor at the annual meeting at Calvary Church in Parsons.

Carrington, a member of First Church in Parsons, had served as clerk and/or treasurer of the association for 39 years.

The officers, who were re-elected, include Bunis Smith, pastor of Flatwoods Church in Holladay, moderator; Mitchell Metcalf, pastor of First Church in Wildersville, vice-moderator; and Mike Rhodes, a member of Calvary Church in Parsons, treasurer/clerk.

The 1988 meeting will be Oct. 17-18 at First Church in Parsons and First Church in Scotts Hill. Doyle W. Neal is the director of missions.

Winnfield, defeated conservative nominee Fred Lowery, pastor of First Church of Bossier City, after a letter went out urging support for Lowery.

Florida was the only state where a candidate identified with the conservative movement was elected president. Bobby Welch, pastor of First Church of Daytona Beach, won easily in the convention in his hometown.

In Texas, a theologically conservative pastor who is politically unaligned, Pastor Joel Gregory of Travis Avenue Church in Fort Worth, was elected without opposition.

In Kentucky, messengers chose between three moderates before electing Howard Cobble of Severns Valley Church in Elizabethtown.

Southern Baptists' Public Affairs Committee and the AIDS crisis came to mind most often when messengers thought about expressing their opinions in resolutions.

The PAC and AIDS drew the attention of eight state conventions that passed resolutions about them. Next came abortion and gambling, followed by a host of other issues.

Seven states took exception to the endorsement of a candidate/nominee for public office. For example, Missouri's resolution said, "Baptists have historically refrained from endorsing or opposing candidates for public office but have openly supported or criticized actions of public officials which impinge on Baptist principles and interests." It also noted disapproval of "a Baptist entity's endorsement of any person for a civil office: local, state, or federal."

Similar measures affirming church-state separation and opposing endorsement were passed in Oklahoma, New

Rogers . . .

(Continued from page 1)

Under the SBC Constitution, the president must announce his appointments at least 45 days before the annual meeting.

Rogers asked that specific information be provided along with the recommendations. If the following information is not included, he said, a lot of staff time is required to obtain the information.

Recommendations should include the full name of the nominee, including correct spelling, the mailing address, including ZIP code, and the home and business telephone numbers, including area code.

The recommendations also should include whether the nominee is a pastor or a layperson. If the person is other than a pastor, but is involved in church/denominational work, the title and place of employment should be included. For laypeople, the business or occupation and place of employment should be included.

In addition, the recommendations should include the nominee's church affiliation, the church mailing address, total church membership, amount the church gave to the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget during the 1987-88 associational year, and the percentage of the church budget the Cooperative Program gifts represented.

The nominations should include the number of baptisms in the church in the 1987-88 associational year, whether the nominee plans to attend the SBC in San Antonio, and the state convention in which the nominee lives.

People submitting information should include their own name, title, mailing address, and home and business phone numbers.

York, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

At least five states also addressed the PAC's request for the SBC to dissolve its ties to the Baptist Joint Committee. All of them refuted the idea.

Three states put their money where their votes were, agreeing to continue supporting the Baptist Joint Committee if the SBC severs ties.

Texas approved such a measure without noting an amount of support. New York approved \$500, its current pro rata share of the Baptist Joint Committee budget. And Virginia placed a \$3,000 line item for the committee in its budget, with the provision that if the committee's funding is "significantly altered," Virginia's budget committee may recommend further funding to ensure 'reasonable financial support for the agency.'

Resolutions of support for the SBC's continued participation in the Baptist Joint Committee also were passed in North Carolina and Missouri.

AIDS, or acquired immune deficiency syndrome, was addressed by at least eight conventions.

In Illinois, for example, the resolution called AIDS a worldwide menace that reaches across all boundaries and brings suffering to all victims as well as their families and loved ones. It opposed "sexual promiscuity, marital infidelity, and the failure of families to teach children to be morally responsible in matters of sexual relationships" and urged churches "to work with families in efforts to teach our children" sexual morality and responsibility.

Additional states that approved AIDS statements are Alabama, Arkansas, Hawaii, Oklahoma, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas.

Abortion and gambling were addressed by at least seven states each. West Virginia and Ohio took the strongest stands against abortion. West Virginia previously passed a resolution that opposed abortion for any reason other than to save the life of the mother. This year it expressed opposition to "the cruel, murderous holocaust of abortion on demand, except in cases where the life of the mother is in clear and definite danger." The Ohio measure called for the repeal of legalized abortions.

In Arkansas, messengers defeated an attempt to oppose all abortions except those which save the life of the mother. Instead, they affirmed the convention's stated opposition to abortion which makes exceptions for rape, incest, and saving the mother's life. An Alabama statement opposed abortion on demand but did not mention exceptions. Other conventions that reported anti-abortion resolutions were Kansas-Nebraska, Northern Plains, and Oklahoma.

States that ratified anti-gambling resolutions almost universally did so in response to particular circumstances. For example: Kentucky's newly elected governor campaigned on a promise to bring in a lottery, the Missouri convention's executive board is involved in a lawsuit challenging a multistate lottery, Arkansas expects a lottery referendum next fall, and Florida has been the battleground for legalized gambling for several years.

Messengers in each of those states voiced opposition to gambling, as did messengers in Kansas-Nebraska, New Mexico, and South Carolina.

Virginia Baptists passed a resolution affirming "the right of Prescott Memorial Church and every other Baptist church to call whomever they determine is the God-appointed person as their pastor."

Holston reports increased work

The 201st annual session of Holston Baptist Association drew about 280 persons to hear reports of its "banner year" of work, said Tal Thompson, director of missions.

The session was in October at Bowman-town Church in Jonesborough.

It was reported that baptisms in the association increased for the second year in a row and totaled 700 and that Sunday School enrollment jumped by more than 900.

The association received an award from Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes Inc. for support from 75 percent of its churches. It earned one of 13 standard association Sunday School certificates in the state. It also was cited as one of the leaders in starting new media library centers in churches.

Christian Social Ministries Director Bev Smothers recognized Mary Ruth Livingston and Alice Anthony as volunteers of the year for their 12 years of service to the Johnson City Baptist Center.

Also reports were made by several of the 71 volunteers from the association that worked in Venezuela during the past year supporting the partnership.

The association elected the following officers: Joe Blankenship, pastor of Oak Hill Church in Jonesborough, moderator succeeding Frank Lethcoe, pastor of Midway Church in Johnson City; Mike Womack, pastor of Calvary Church in Erwin, assistant moderator; E. W. Barnes, retired pastor of Gray, treasurer; and Tenna Eades, a member of Central Church in Johnson City, clerk.

The April 19, 1988, meeting will be at Tennessee Avenue Church in Bristol. The site has not yet been selected for the Oct. 18 session.

Letters to the editor

Letters on any religion-related subject are welcomed. Letters of over 300 words will not be used. Other letters may be shortened at the discretion of the editor. No unsigned letters will be printed, but writer's name will be withheld for sufficient reason. Letters must contain complete address and telephone number.

Not political

If it were not so sad, it would be hilariously funny. Our SBC president, three past presidents, Paige Patterson, and who knows who else gathered in Atlanta (Baptist and Reflector, page 3, November 25) for a "fellowship" meeting. The agenda was just a "casual" talk about the election of the next president of the SBC and the "political" actions of Moderates. Of course, this is not political!

Howard G. Olive
1735 Old Niles Ferry Road
Maryville 37801

Paradox to reader

Current Baptist rumblings may lead to confusion. Strange as it may seem there is a group within our Convention sending out contrasting signals simultaneously. Whether or not it is intentional is unknown, but it is paradoxical.

In our ranks there are those vehemently against abortion. At least they say they are. However their actions indicate they have already attempted an abortion, and will soon try again. While Larry Baker was only a fetus in his position as Christian Life Commission Director, his mother (the trustees), sought to murder him ... never giving him a chance to live. This is because he wasn't the exact type of child she wanted to have.

Likewise, this faction among us was opposed to Harold Bennett's visit to the pope. They claimed it would be construed as a compromise with Catholicism. Sometimes though, actions speak louder than words. By their behavior we can detect

their desire for papal control and authority. This was clearly evidenced by their "excommunication" of a local church which would not submit to who they said should be pastor.

Ambiguous Baptist deeds and words are everywhere these days. Those who say they are against certain things are actually for them.

So then we see that abortion is not the issue. Neither is the Catholic pope.

Don't believe everything you hear. Watch for proceedings to validate true belief.

Scripture says, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." Listen up Southern Baptists.

Daniel Joseph Martin
635 Skyview Drive
Nashville 37206

Observations not so funny

I would offer three observations about the Tennessee Baptist Convention of several weeks ago.

First, that an auditorium of "Bible-believing" Baptists would find humorous a play on words about Paul's admonition that pastor's should be the "husband of one wife" was an interesting twist. I've heard arguments for free-interpretation of scripture, but "free-joking"? (Also include a whimsical alumni this question: Has Ms. Sehested spoken in a chapel service at Carson-Newman College, and if she has what criteria did they use to select her?)

Second, Tennessee Baptists gave a standing ovation to the gentleman who opened the door of legalized gambling to our state. While some of our brethren were fighting horse racing, we offered two crushed vanilla wafers, backslapping, and another joke. I realize this ovation was respect for the office, but perhaps we should've "prophetically" restrained ourselves.

Third, the committee's recommendation to limit the time an individual can serve on the Committee on Committees and Committee on Boards was rejected. As one committee member reminded us this was unadvisable because there are 516 positions to fill and pastor's tenure isn't what it ought to be, so this would be a hardship. Last time I counted there were over 3,500 Baptist churches in Tennessee. It's a shame there's not more than 516 qualified pastors, associational workers, and lay people in those 3,500 plus churches in any seven-year period to serve our convention.

Rev. L. E. Lyon
1954 Euclid Ave.
Knoxville 37921

Not biblical theology

In regard to the letter to the editor titled "Spread the gospel" in the Nov. 18 issue of the Baptist and Reflector, wherein Acts 5 is used to seek the Holy Spirit's guidance, I would like for the writer and others to consider the following quote from a book by a well known Baptist writer:

"Liberal scholars have adopted the

A note with last week's letters referred to several letters that affirmed Shelby County Association's action dis-fellowshipping Prescott Memorial Church, Memphis. A reminder comes to us from Charles Parker, noting that his letter did not support the association's action. Editor.

statement of Gamaliel as their creed. It will be remembered that Gamaliel counseled the Jews not to oppose the Christians for 'if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it' Acts 5:38-39.

"Let it not be forgotten that Gamaliel's advice is not biblical theology; and if it were followed in the practical realm of experience then we would have to recognize Islam as 'of God' because of its rapid growth throughout the world. We would have to acknowledge Mormonism (six people in 1830 to over 5 million in 1982) in the same category as Islam."

I am a strong believer in union even where their is diversity in belief. As a Christian and a Southern Baptist I have learned to live with that.

In accordance with Baptist and Reflector policy, this writer's name is withheld by personal request. — Editor

Grief and frustration

As a grateful graduate of a Baptist college and seminary and a former trustee of Southeastern Seminary, I feel an overwhelming need in grief and frustration to ask some questions of my fellow Southern Baptists:

How many presidents and deans of our seminaries and colleges are going to have to resign under pressure or be fired, leav-

ing a wake of deeply discouraged and angry students and faculty?

How many board members are going to have to die of heart attacks in emotionally charged meetings?

How many institutions and agencies are going to have to be crippled or destroyed completely?

How many top-notch scholars and gifted leaders are we going to have to lose?

How many editors of state papers are going to be muzzled or forced to resign?

How many churches are going to have to be torn asunder fighting over shadow issues, before mainline Southern Baptists simply rise up in righteous indignation and declare "Enough is enough!"?

Why should we hide a relatively small group of leaders behind their takeover tactics behind the pious smokescreen of inerrancy? Surely it is unmistakably clear by now that is simply not the issue at all!

The presidents of our seminaries have tried to pacify every demand, but new demands come and always will, because that is the way the pharisaical mind works.

Jesus did not hesitate to deal directly and firmly with Pharisees who had an inordinate need to be right and make everyone else say it and do it just like they did.

When are all of us going to merely be more like Jesus and stop this childish, petty, Kingdom-destroying bickering?

Moncrief Jordan
Rt. 2, Box 719
Talbot 37877

One Word More

By W. Fletcher Allen

I learned some valuable lessons about gambling early in life.

And I learned something about winning with grace and losing with dignity.

Jimmy was the marbles champ. No matter who played him in the schoolyard circles, he was the champ. Only a fourth grader, he knew all the moves and he had the accurate touch. The older boys didn't have a chance either — when they played against Jimmy.

He would hunker down, hold the shooter against the knuckle of his thumb tightly with his index finger — and shoot and shoot and shoot. Anyone who had even a slight hope of beating Jimmy at marbles had better shoot first and be lucky enough to keep on shooting.

That didn't happen often. Most of us missed on the third or fourth shot. Jimmy also had a knack for "rolling" close to the line. When we lined up to determine who would shoot first, Jimmy had the feel for it. He would shake his head of tousled red hair, grin warmly through a mass of freckles, and roll that shooter right up to the line — where it would stop, giving him first shot at the ring, drawn on the flat schoolyard and filled with marbles.

As I said, he would shoot and shoot and shoot. His style, as we called it, was to clean up. Nothing left in the circle, we noticed, after Jimmy shot.

I thought it was his shooter — the magic must be in the shooter. He used a dark red shooter. Time and time again, guided by his skilled thumb and index finger, it would knock other marbles from the ring — and stick for another shot ... until they were all his.



Allen

You see, we played for keeps. Well, I bargained with Jimmy. Wanting to be the schoolyard marbles champ, I traded him twenty-five marbles for his shooter.

You guessed it — I lost again. He just picked out a new shooter and kept on knocking all the marbles out of the ring.

Playing for "keeps" was expensive. I soon kicked the habit. I discovered there was not much fun losing all the time, getting wiped out. That was a lesson about gambling. And while Jimmy was always a gracious winner — he really was — most of us who lost seldom did it with dignity.

We could take a lesson from Cannon County football coach Mike Mayfield. His team lost early in the season by 71-0. He said he realized his game plan was in trouble early, just after the opening kickoff.

While he did question some of the plays used by the winners after a substantial first half lead was built, Mayfield still didn't show bitterness.

I think that is remarkable in today's world. Mayfield admitted to some unkind thoughts late in the game when the opponent was faking extra point kicks and running or passing for two points — but apparently he tried to keep the whole thing in perspective.

We have stressed winning — as a national standard. Nothing else seems to satisfy. Gone are the days when the game, how you played it, was the thing. And that goes for more in life than just athletics. First place is the ultimate, the only way.

Sadly, that attitude is overtaking us in denominational life. There is scarcity in the art of gracious winning and dignified losing. Our emphasis is on winning. Perhaps that is why losing seems so sour to us.

There is a need for us to remember what Jesus meant when He talked about "he who is first shall be last." I remember that Jimmy often let us win in the marbles ring. It helped us, and him, get a balanced feeling about winning and losing.

Bill Moyers features SBC in TV series

By Stan Haste

WASHINGTON (BP) — To Bill Moyers, the significance of the struggle for control of the Southern Baptist Convention reaches beyond the boundaries of the nation's largest Protestant denomination, stretching even to the country's political system.

That is one conclusion reached by the veteran broadcast journalist in his upcoming three-part series, "Moyers: God and Politics," to be aired on consecutive Wednesday nights in December.

Another is that Southern Baptists are well on their way to becoming a different people than they were when Moyers was a boy in Marshall, Texas.

The former CBS television news commentator recalled growing up in Central Baptist Church in that east Texas town during a recent interview: "The first things I learned about faith and democracy I learned from people like Aaron and Lois Rives, Herbert and Mary Pace, James and Frances Neely, Marjorie and Cecil Edwards and a lot of other saints long departed. They didn't teach me a creed; there was no creed or coercion. We practiced the priesthood of the believer — every Christian is competent to deal directly with God. No human being, no institution comes between you and God. That's Baptist."

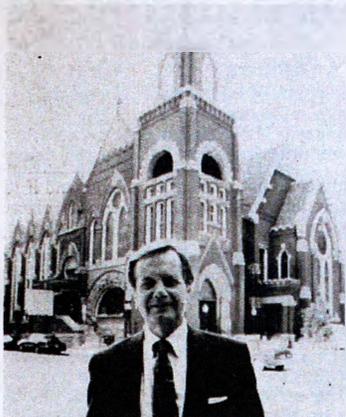
While they argued about what the Bible meant in their lives, he says, "no one could enforce on any of us any particular interpretation of Scripture."

Further, he adds, the people in his boyhood church "taught me that the core of fellowship is not doctrine or dogma, but freedom, the soul's freedom to follow the teachings of the Bible and the Spirit of God as one feels led."

Moyers also remembers learning in church training union about "how Baptists had been born fighting for freedom and suffered for it and lost their lives in Europe for insisting on their right to interpret the Bible for themselves." And he learned that in colonial America, his denominational ancestors were beaten for seeking to exercise that right, were "driven into exile for preaching the gospel their way (and) refusing to pay taxes to support the Congregationalists and the Anglicans."

He also is convinced the current division among Southern Baptists represents more than a schism. "It isn't just a schism because Baptists have always, like amoebas, split and divided," he says.

It is on the larger political landscape that the conservative surge is having a potent effect. The conservative movement,



ON RELIGION AND POLITICS — Bill Moyers stands outside First Church in Dallas where he interviewed the church's pastor, W. A. Criswell, for his TV series.

he insists, "is going to continue to be a powerful social, cultural, and political

force in American life for some time to come."

Although Baptists long have debated the Bible's meaning for the political order, Moyers sees the current trend of insisting the Bible demands political partisanship in the secular realm as something new: "What's new is the determination of this sizable faction... to make one view of the Bible — their view — the test of religious and political truth. For Baptists, that's radical. And that's having far-reaching implications on our political life, on our cultural life and on our religious life. That is new."

Although Moyers insists conservatives are sincere and convinced they are led by the Spirit of God, "They are nonetheless calling into question the historic integrity of Baptists as I was raised to think of Baptists."

Noting the alliance of some leaders in the conservative SBC movement with the politics and politicians of the "Religious Right," Moyers notes control of the SBC carries with it political overtones: "This control is politically important because the convention shapes how Baptists bring their influence to bear on candidates for

office and issues such as school prayer, abortion and foreign policy. So the story is not just about Baptists. It's about the continuing battle over religious liberty in this country.

"Because our ethical sensitivities are informed by the theological underpinnings of our religious institutions, the outcome of this struggle will have much to say about the political landscape of the country long after Ronald Reagan has retired to California."

Among Southern Baptists interviewed on the Moyers special is Paul Pressler of Houston, one of the architects of the conservative SBC movement. Another prominent conservative, W. A. Criswell of First Baptist Church, Dallas, also appears in a segment filmed in his office.

Outspoken moderates such as Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Russell H. Dilday and Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs Executive Director James M. Dunn are featured also.

"The Battle for the Bible" is the second of the three-part series. It is scheduled at 9 p.m. EST, Wednesday, Dec. 16, on national public television.

The first in the series, "The Kingdom Divided," examines the equally intense religio-political struggle in Central America. Moyers calls that struggle "a second Reformation of the Catholic Church." He describes the program as "the most important story I've reported" since his critically acclaimed CBS documentary, "The Vanishing Family: Crisis in Black America."

One week after the feature on Southern Baptists, Moyers is to present an in-depth introduction to the movement known as "Christian Reconstruction," a force he believes to be far more important than the Religious Right of the 1980s. The movement, he says, is built on the belief that "the person, family, church, schools — all of society — civil government, the arts, medicine, media, economics, law (and) business must be reconstructed under accordance with biblical principles, values and laws."

The upcoming series was produced by Moyers' own company, Public Affairs Television Inc. of New York. It was underwritten by a grant from Chevron, with additional funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and public television stations.

Professor discusses obstacles to ministry with AIDS victims

LOUISVILLE (BP) — AIDS victims often fail to seek religious counsel because they "fear a moral judgment will be made on their lifestyle," according to a University of Louisville psychiatry professor.

Robert Frierson told students at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary religious issues often become important to people with AIDS as they confront the grief process that accompanies the condition. Yet AIDS victims are often afraid to share their religious concerns with pastors because of the stigma attached to the disease, he added.

The problem is "fueled by TV ministers who say AIDS is retribution for a particular type of lifestyle and that it's intended as God's judgment," said Frierson

in a Nov. 11 address at the seminary's Ethics Luncheon, a student forum concerned with moral issues.

Frierson mentioned several psychological stresses associated with AIDS that are not common in other terminal diseases. While most people with terminal illnesses can expect sympathy from others, AIDS victims usually are shunned, he said.

"People have been known to lose their jobs, lose their insurance and their church affiliation by just being suspected of having AIDS," he said.

AIDS victims also experience "tremendous feelings of guilt" he added noting, victims worry about who they might have infected and also are concerned about who might have spread the disease to them.

People with AIDS see themselves as having little hope, he said: "There are no known survivors of AIDS. This leaves them (AIDS victims) with a tremendous sense of helplessness."

The way to solve the AIDS crisis is through education, Frierson said. While pastors, as trusted community leaders, could be effective communicators about AIDS prevention, he said, many are reluctant to address the issue for fear they might be perceived as "endorsing the behavior" that leads to AIDS.

A trusted pastor also could provide needed assistance in helping a person with AIDS to cope with the condition, he added. However, he cautioned pastors about "moralizing and being judgmental" with an AIDS patient even though they might disagree with the person's lifestyle.

Not all persons who have AIDS have been involved in homosexual activity, Frierson noted. While the majority of victims in the United States are homosexuals and bisexuals, as many heterosexuals as homosexuals have AIDS in Africa, he said.

AIDS is only transmitted through bodily fluids and not by casual contact with an AIDS carrier, he stressed. Besides sexual contact, AIDS is most often spread by intravenous drug users who use unsterile needles and by pregnant women who transmit AIDS to their unborn children.

Polk County sets new strategies

Polk County Baptist Association adopted the report of a strategy planning committee during the Oct. 19-20 annual meeting at Old Ocoee Church in Benton.

The report included recommendations for a new staff person to direct education and resort ministries, an information center for tourists, and development of new churches, new ministries, and the present associational program.

W. L. Shipman, director of missions, noted that Paul Hall, retired associate director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention missions department, served as a consultant to the committee.

A. Frank Curbow, a member of Shiloh Church in Ocoee, was elected to succeed Jerry Campbell, who was a pastor in the association, as moderator. Other officers for the next year are Clyde Crook Jr., pastor of Chestee Church in Calhoun, assistant moderator; Evelyn Guy, a member of First Church in Benton, treasurer/assistant clerk; and Judy Rogers, a member of Zion Church in Benton, clerk/assistant treasurer.

Oak Grove Church in Benton will be the site of the Oct. 17-18, 1988, meeting.

Church musicians elect officers

NASHVILLE — Officers for 1987-88 were elected at the Tennessee Baptist Convention Church Music Conference which met Nov. 9 at Immanuel Church in Nashville.

Tommy Webster, minister of music at Ellendale Church in Ellendale, was elected president. Other officers are Mike Hodges, minister of music at Manley Church in Morristown, first vice-president and president-elect; Mike Casey, minister of music at First Church in Cookeville, second vice-president; and Jere Adams of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, secretary/treasurer.

Other executive council members are Herman May, minister of music at Brainerd Church in Chattanooga, immediate past president, and Julian Suggs, TBC church music department director,

Carroll-Benton meets

The messengers of Carroll-Benton Baptist Association received proceeds from a scholarship fund and elected officers at their annual meeting Oct. 19-20 at Prospect Church in Hollow Rock and First Church in Camden.

Proceeds from the Tennessee Baptist Foundation managed Carroll-Benton Memorial Scholarship Fund in the amount of \$405 were presented by Earl Wilson of the foundation. The money will be allocated to Union University for needy students.

The officers were re-elected and include John K. Adams, pastor of New Hope Church in McKenzie, moderator; Ken Eudy, pastor of Howse Church in Atwood, assistant moderator; Al Hilliard, a member of First Church in Huntingdon, treasurer; and Lillian Rice, a member of Prospect Church, clerk.

The 1988 meeting will be Oct. 17-18 at First Church in Huntingdon and Bethel Church in McKenzie. James E. Humphreys Jr. is the director of missions.

Alcohol abuse elicits new federal initiatives

By Tim Fields

WASHINGTON (BP) — U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Otis Brown has announced new government initiatives designed to fight alcohol abuse.

Bowen outlined the government's plan during a national conference on alcohol abuse he convened in Washington.

The initiatives include the formation of a privately run citizens commission to promote public awareness and understanding about alcohol abuse and consideration of the possibility of legislation that would require warning labels on alcoholic beverages.

The government also would look at the possibility of pushing for voluntary changes in television and radio programming to dissuade youths from drinking alcoholic beverages, he said.

Alcoholism and alcohol abuse cost the United States about \$117 billion a year in medical bills and lost productivity, participants in the conference learned.

The cost to the nation is more than five times as high as the \$23 billion congressional leaders and the Reagan administration are trying to save in the current budget talks, said Thomas R. Burke, Bowen's chief of staff.

John V. Young, director of drug and alcohol concerns for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, commended the government's new initiatives designed to curb alcohol abuse and called on Southern Baptists to support them.

"Beverage alcohol is without question the most abused drug in American society," said Young. "The cost to society of alcohol-related problems goes far beyond the staggering \$117 billion per year."

"Alcohol abuse takes its toll in lives that are lost through drunk driving and in human suffering that is endured by the millions of alcoholics themselves. It also devastates people through spouse abuse, child abuse, divorce, fetal alcohol syndrome, lost productivity, crime, and plane, train, boat, and industrial accidents."

Southern Baptists should not only let their voices be heard on the three main initiatives announced by Bowen, but they should also push for an excise tax on alcoholic beverages, Young said.

"Tax revenues generated from the sale of alcoholic beverages in 1984 amounted to \$12.6 billion, while the total cost of alcohol-related problems that year was \$120.8 billion. The net result was that for every dollar of alcohol revenue generated in this nation in 1984, society was required to pay \$9.54 to cover the costs of alcohol problems," he noted.

"A number of concerned groups such as the American Council on Alcohol Prob-

lems, the National Council on Alcoholism, and the Center for Science in the Public Interest have been reminding Congress the present excise tax rates for beer and wine were established in 1951. During this 36-year period the consumer price index has gone up 405 percent.

"The financially affluent lobbying campaigns of the brewers, vintners and distillers have obviously been extremely successful in influencing the nation's lawmakers. In the face of the growing federal deficit, it is high time for the books to be balanced and for alcohol taxes to pay for some of the problems that are caused by this deadly drug," he contended.

Young urged Southern Baptists to let their voices be heard on the alcohol abuse issue by contacting their congressmen and senators to speak in favor of an excise tax increase on alcoholic beverages, tough laws to prohibit alcohol advertising campaigns that target youth, equal air time for education and prevention, and warning labels on alcoholic beverages.

Allen suggests SBC conflict diminished volunteer ranks

FORT WORTH — When Baptists settle their differences and get back to God's business, they will have 10,000 lay mission volunteers serving around the world, predicted the former Southern Baptist Convention president who led in launching Mission Service Corps.

Jimmy R. Allen, who was elected SBC president when the convention adopted Mission Service Corps — the army of lay mission volunteers — as a key component of Southern Baptist mission efforts in 1977, spoke at a 10th anniversary breakfast of MSC during the Baptist General Convention of Texas in Fort Worth.

About 400 current and former MSC volunteers heard Allen say, "I believe that if we hadn't been caught up in controversy in the past few years, we would have 10,000 volunteers serving now."

Texas MSC Coordinator Sam Pearis said 2,198 MSC volunteers have been

New Mexico notes 75th anniversary

HOBBS, N.M. (BP) — The Baptist convention in New Mexico celebrated its 75th anniversary, approved a \$5.2-million budget, and honored Executive Director Emeritus Harry P. Stagg in its convention at First Church of Hobbs Nov. 3-5.

President Ed Meyers, pastor of First

Study continues on needs of hungry people in U.S.

By Kathy Palen

WASHINGTON (BP) — Acknowledging the effective ways private organizations have responded to the plight of the hungry, a U.S. House of Representatives committee questioned how much these groups should be expected to do in the face of declining federal government support of hunger-related programs.

"Charities, church and civic groups, private voluntary agencies, corporations, community associations, and foundations are, on a daily basis, demonstrating enormous capacity to respond to the plight of the hungry," said Rep. Mickey Leland, during a hearing held by the House Select Committee on Hunger, which he chairs. "The question is, however, how much these organizations can be expected to do during a period of retreat from responsibility on the part of the federal government."

Leland said when the federal government cuts its spending for human services programs, the resources of non-profit groups are reduced at the very time the

non-profit sector is called upon to do more. Although private support of charitable organizations has increased since 1980, those increased donations have not offset the cutbacks in federal funding, he said.

The pastor of a Southern Baptist Convention-affiliated church was among the witnesses who offered suggestions to the House panel on strengthening the relationship between the federal government and the private sector in hunger alleviation.

Henry C. Gregory III, pastor of Shiloh Church, Washington, testified that from earliest biblical history, the community of faith has had a deep concern for meeting the needs of the poor. Out of that tradition, he said, the church emerged as a community that shares "not just a spiritualized gospel, but a message of hope and helpfulness to persons in situations of suffering and deprivation."

Gregory, who described his church's involvement in food distribution as symbolic of what other local congregations are doing and seeking to do, said the work of local congregations and clusters of congregations is not enough.

"The demand is too great, the need is too widespread," he said. "The problem of hunger has increased in recent years. It involves the whole community and its solutions must involve collaboration of the community of the whole."

Gregory recommended the federal government provide additional financial assistance for counseling and hunger-prevention programs.

An official of United Way of America praised a program initiated by Congress in 1982 — the Emergency Food and Shelter National Board Program — as a model of private sector-government cooperation.

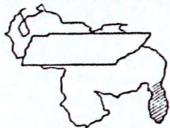
Robert M. Beggan, United Way senior vice-president, said the program has involved new participants — including a 400 percent increase in the number of churches involved in the program — in hunger-alleviation efforts and has increased the effectiveness of existing systems.

But Beggan said the program has limitations. Its funding is too low to meet the continuing emergency that is affecting more and more families; is irregular and often dries up when the need is the greatest; and is designed to "hold the line," not win the war, he said.

"The voluntary sector has proven itself an effective, knowledgeable, committed avenue for bringing new resources to the table, energizing volunteers and business on behalf of the hungry and homeless, coordinating existing structures and creating new ones," Beggan testified. "Our monetary and volunteer commitment has never been higher. But we need more cooperation and funding from government."

"The Emergency Food and Shelter Program and innovative state and local level partnerships have shown that public-private sector partnership works. That emerging partnership must continue and be strengthened on the emergency level; it must also be applied to longer-term, systemic approaches. It must be a normal, expected way of doing business, with the voluntary sector asked not only to deliver services but to participate in designing and evaluating the systems that will make a difference."

Bringing the news first



Tennessee/Venezuela prayer net partnership

—Missionary celebrating birthday: Shirley Clark, Dec. 2, women's worker in Los Teques.

—Venezuelan home missionaries having birthdays: Nicolas Macho and Lilia Cruz, Dec. 6.

—Pray for the Bible Institutes in Venezuela which provide training. They are staffed by missionaries and other volunteers. Missionary Richard Beal is the national director of the Bible institutes.

—Pray for Ladimiro Urdaneta, a church leader in Merida, who has Hodgkin's disease.

—Primera Iglesia Bautista de Valencia is beginning a medical clinic and needs medical supplies and workers.

Church of Roswell, was re-elected. Other officers are King Sanders, pastor of Rodeo Road Church in Santa Fe, first vice-president; Wayne Brazil, pastor at Weed and Pinion churches in southern New Mexico, second vice-president.

Of the \$5.2-million budget, \$2.48-million will be raised by the churches in the state. Of the \$2.48-million, 30 percent will be given to the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget, the same percentage contribution as the previous budget.

Stagg, who was executive director of the convention from 1938 to 1968, was honored by the convention by being asked to bring the anniversary sermon, 20 years after his retirement.

Stagg, 89, came to New Mexico to die after he was gassed in World War I. He led the convention through its formative years and in retirement now lives in Albuquerque.

In the convention's memorial service, R. Y. Bradford, executive director of the convention from 1968 to 1974, was remembered by messengers and visitors. Bradford died Oct. 9.

Beulah Association hears Dan Lawler

Dan Lawler of Martin, a retired pastor with 50 years of service, preached the doctrinal sermon of the Beulah Baptist Association annual meeting gathered in Martin Oct. 26.

Action taken at the meeting which met at Broadway Church and Mt. Pelia Church, included electing Ernest Mayo, pastor of Wynnburg Church in Wynnburg, as moderator succeeding Mickey Basham, pastor of Pleasant Hill No. 1 Church in Martin.

Other 1987-88 officers are Jerrell White, pastor of Second Church in Union City, assistant moderator; Bill Flood, a member of First Church in Union City, treasurer; Gwen Armour, a member of First Church in Troy, clerk; Richard Ams, a member of Calvary Church in Union City, assistant treasurer; and Connie White, a member of Second Church in Union City, assistant clerk.

The director of missions is Robert L. Armour and the next meeting will be Oct. 24-25 at Pleasant Hill No. 1 Church in Martin and First Church in Obion.

New England Baptists hold fifth convention

SUDBURY, Mass. (BP) — New England Baptist messengers met Nov. 5-6 for the fifth annual meeting of the Baptist Convention of New England to celebrate 25 years of organized Southern Baptist work in the region.

More than 220 messengers and guests attended the two-day meeting at First Church in Sudbury, Mass., said Executive Director James Curran.

Major business included the adoption of a \$1,914,603 budget for 1988. Of that total, \$511,723 — or 26.7 percent — is to be raised by New England churches. The BCNE will contribute 20.5 percent of the funds it raises from its churches — or \$104,895 — to national and global mission projects through the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget.

Messengers defeated a motion to instruct the BCNE board of directors to name a subcommittee to study the effects of the Southern Baptist theological/political controversy on the convention's work in New England.

James Schneider, pastor of Pleasant Valley Church in Groton, Conn., was elected BCNE president. Other officers are David Waugh, church planter in Providence, R.I., first vice-president; Ken Hale, pastor of Trinity Church in Hanover, N.H., second vice-president; and Jeff Jeffries, associate pastor of Newton Corner Church in Newton, Mass., clerk.

McAlister assumes Central pastorate

Chuck McAlister has assumed the pastorate of Central Church, Chattanooga. He previously served as pastor of First Church, Alcoa.

A native of South Carolina, he was graduated from Clemson (S.C.) University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

McAlister has served in churches in Kentucky, Georgia, Indiana, and Tennessee. He was in the U.S. Army for five years, and has since been a chaplain with the Tennessee Air National Guard.



McAlister



WHITE HOUSE BOUND — Joyful Sounds, a handbell ensemble of First Church in Rogersville, and the director, Michael Clawson, minister of music, prepare to perform at the White House.

Rogersville handbell ensemble to play in the White House

Joyful Sounds, the Ladies Handbell Ensemble of First Church, Rogersville, has been invited to play at the White House in Washington, D. C. on Dec. 20. The ensemble will play for the White House and Executive Office Building Personnel Open House from 2-6 p.m.

The news of the invitation came to Michael Clawson, minister of music at the Rogersville church, just a few weeks ago. He stated, "Thousands of people will tour the White House the day we will play. Isn't that a wonderful opportunity to spread the good news of Christ's birth through our music? It is indeed an honor to be an ambassador of our church and representatives of Rogersville and the state of Tennessee."

Joyful Sounds, one of six handbell

groups invited to play during the holidays, also will be given a private tour of the President's home. The ensemble will spend three days in the capital to prepare and to tour the city.

This ensemble has been a part of the music ministry of First Church for over 18 years. Although the membership does change from time to time, the 12 members who play the four octaves of handbells have a combined accumulation of over 106 years of handbell ringing experience.

They have played for church, associational, and state Baptist activities, and will play for the Biltmore House and Gardens in Asheville, N. C., on Dec. 31, and for the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union Centennial Celebration to be held May 13-14, 1988, in Richmond, Va.

Hardeman County re-elects Smith

About 300 persons from 28 churches gathered for the 65th annual meeting of Hardeman County Baptist Association on Oct. 19-20. The theme of the meeting, "Love Never Fails," was interpreted by David Chappell, pastor of West Memorial Church in Saulsberry; Dennis McMahan, pastor of Piney Grove Church in Henderson; and Doug Baker, pastor of Parrans Chapel Church in Bolivar.

Pierce writes Uniform series

Rice A. Pierce will be writing the Uniform Lesson Series for the Baptist and Reflector beginning with this issue. He will continue through February.

A Sunday School teacher and trustee of First Church in Goodlettsville, Pierce retired from the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville after serving for 27 years as editor of church training, Bible study, and teaching materials.

Pierce was graduated from Union University in Jackson and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Books he has written include *Leading Dynamic Bible Study* and *How to Enjoy Bible Study with Others*. Pierce has been a deacon for 30 years. Much of his church life has been spent in the membership of First Church, Union City.



Pierce

The meeting was held at Essary Springs Church in Pocahontas and Dixie Hills Church in Bolivar.

Re-elected as moderator was James Smith, pastor of Trinity Church in Bolivar. Other officers elected were Dennis McMahan, pastor of Piney Grove Church, assistant moderator; Mrs. Oliver L. Young, a member of Piney Grove Church, treasurer; and Mrs. Kenneth E. Craft, a member of Parrans Chapel Church, clerk.

The Oct. 17-18, 1988, meeting will be at Brint's Chapel Church in Middleton and First Church in Bolivar.

The director of missions is Deryl G. Watson.

Cumberland adopts new building plans

Plans for a two-story associational office building were adopted and John D. Laida, pastor of First Church in Clarksville, was honored at the Cumberland Baptist Association meeting Oct. 26.

Assembled at Hillcrest Church in Clarksville, the association noted Laida's 27 years of service in the association. Laida, who is retiring Dec. 31, preached during the meeting.

Re-elected were Roy Mullens, pastor of Spring Creek Church in Clarksville, as moderator; and James King, pastor of Maplewood Church in Clarksville, as assistant moderator.

The associational director of missions is Harold A. Shoulders and the 1988 meetings will be April 18 at St. Bethlehem Church in St. Bethlehem and Oct. 24 at Pleasant View Church in Clarksville.

Hawaii Baptists meet on new site

HONOLULU (BP) — The Hawaii Baptist Convention met Nov. 5-7 at the newly acquired six-and-a-half-acre Honolulu property recently bought from the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Convent.

The property now houses the elementary classes of the Hawaii Baptist Academy, which following relocation in August, jumped more than 100 in enrollment to 948.

Hawaii Baptists adopted a general budget of \$1,754,967, of which \$625,043 is anticipated to come from the 49 churches, 34 church-type missions, and 11 preaching stations affiliated with the convention. Hawaii Baptists increased their share with the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program unified budget from 27.5 percent to 27.75 percent.

The convention voted to commend Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, and Carolyn Weatherford, executive director of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, for their recent attempt to secure a relationship of cooperation and mutual respect between Baptists and Catholics on the national and worldwide levels.

Both Bennett and Weatherford drew criticism after they met with Pope John Paul II in early September during the pontiff's visit to the United States.

Messengers also overwhelmingly turned down a suggestion Hawaii Baptists have a full discussion on the causes of the controversy going on in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Cliff Hoff, pastor of Olivet Church in Honolulu, was re-elected president.

Personal Perspective

By Tom Madden
TBC Executive
Secretary-Treasurer



"Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler" (Psalm 91:3).

Recently as I read this verse I recalled as a child how, when visiting with my cousin, we set out to trap rabbits. We set and baited the traps, but never did catch one. However, I still recall the excitement, and then the disappointment.

I believe the fowler referred to in this passage is the devil and that he is continually setting traps with which to catch men. Once trapped, sinful habits both enslave and hold firmly.

A trap seems harmless. Always they are covered. No victim of the trap ever expected to be caught.

A trap is baited. It is meant to entice. Always there are at least two forces at work in us: the carnal desires of the flesh inside and appeal of the world on the outside.

The design of the trap is to hold securely. If a victim escapes it is not because it is so designed. The entrapped invariably experience suffering and maybe death.

However, God can deliver from the snare of the fowler. He can keep us from falling victim, and even after we do, He can rescue us from the snare. "He breaks the power of cancelled sin and sets the prisoner free."

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8).

Watch out for the traps!

Pray . . .



(FMB) PHOTO By Joanna Pinneo

Kartik Singh doesn't know the name of Jesus.

He starts each day facing his Hindu gods, hoping to live through the day, pulling his rickshaw through hazardous Calcutta traffic. His family, including baby, Sonu, consumes his interest when he isn't working.

Kartik Singh may never know the name of Jesus. For the Christian community makes up only a tiny minority of the world's second most populated nation. Most of India's millions will never even meet a Christian—unless you pray. Pray that the people of India will hear the good news of Jesus.

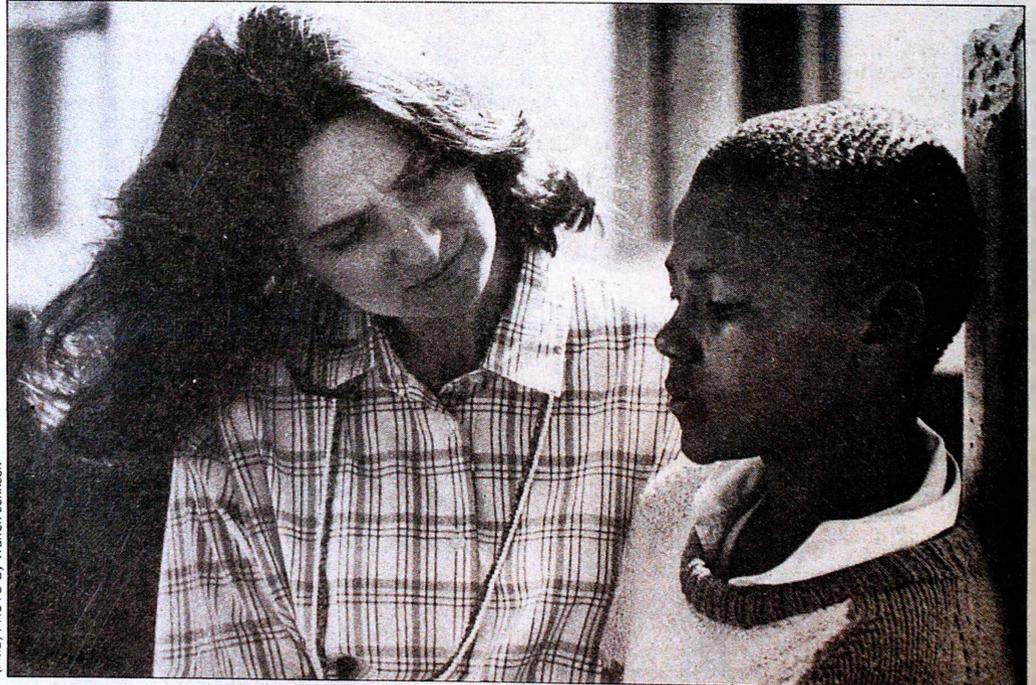
Kartik Singh is not alone. On July 11, 1987, the world's population passed the 5 billion mark. Many of those have never heard the name of Jesus. Even fewer have had a personal encounter with him. Pray that Southern Baptist missionaries and their fellow Baptists around the world will be used by God to help all men, women and children to hear the good news.

When Christian churches were allowed to reopen following the cultural revolution, Western Christians were thrilled to hear of a church that not only survived years of persecution, but also prospered. Today, Southern Baptists are finding ways they can cooperate in strengthening the church in China while still respecting China's ban on missionaries. Pray that Chinese Christians will find ways to help their countrymen hear about Jesus.



(FMB) PHOTO By Joanna Pinneo

While some Americans may have written off South Africa as a hopeless case, Southern Baptist missionaries Keith and Terry Bakley have rolled up their sleeves and gone to work, offering both the message of Jesus—and the touch of his love. Terry has been able to minister to homeless children, such as this boy, through their Khayamnandi (Sweet Home) Baptists have started in Cape Town. Pray that other young people around the world who are victims of strife, poverty and merely hopelessness, will hear about Jesus.



(FMB) PHOTO By Warren Johnson

Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions
Nov. 29-Dec. 6, 1987
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
National Goal: \$75 million
Tennessee Goal: \$4,800,888

That All May Hear

Tennessean finds students need 'foreign missionary'

NASHVILLE — Brenda Tenpenny once thought she was to be a foreign missionary but didn't know how or where God would use her. She has found her niche for foreign missions in East Tennessee. Tenpenny has opened her Morristown

home in the past four years to international students from Carson-Newman College and to partnership students from Japan. Now, she believes a personal relationship she has forged with a Southern Baptist missionary to Japan will enhance her missions involvement.

Loudon County acts to note volunteers

The 25 volunteers who participated in the August 1987 crusades supporting the Tennessee/Venezuela partnership were honored during the annual meeting of Loudon County Baptist Association. It met Oct. 29-30 at Bethany Church and First Church in Loudon and Kingston Pike Church in Lenoir City.

Framed certificates were presented to the volunteers. It also was reported that 16 other volunteers from the association served in other countries and \$48,000 was raised for foreign missions projects.

Other action included the election of the 1987-88 officers. They are John Burleson, pastor of Dixie Lee Church in Lenoir City, moderator, succeeding Glenn Gamble, pastor of Pleasant Hill Church in Lenoir City; E. M. Sherwood, pastor of Blairland Church in Loudon, assistant moderator; Mrs. Charles Amos, associational office secretary, treasurer; and Raymond C. Atwood, director of missions, clerk.

The Oct. 17-18, 1988, meeting will be at Vaughns Chapel Church and Blairland Church in Loudon and at First Church in Lenoir City.

In an effort to strengthen her work with international students, Tenpenny attended a recent workshop for workers with international students sponsored by the national student ministry department at the Sunday School Board.

Attending with Tenpenny was Jan Hixson, her missionary friend who is on furlough in Morristown.

Tenpenny's first involvement with international students came five years ago when a college department teacher at Manley Church in Morristown asked for a family to provide a place for two Nigerian students to stay while dorms were closed during the Christmas holidays.

"My husband raised his hand. I poked him and said we didn't have room," Tenpenny recalled.

Those students were only the first internationals to find room in the Tenpenny house. Since then, few international students or international workers who crossed Tenpenny's path have been able to pass by without experiencing her East Tennessee hospitality.

"We can be a witness. We can live our lives to be missionaries by opening our homes," said Tenpenny, who for the past four years has been WMU director at Manley Church.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT WORK — Brenda Tenpenny, left, and Jan Hixson, have found they can be partners in foreign missions and international student work through their particular ministries. Tenpenny is WMU director at Manley Church, Morristown. Hixson is a Southern Baptist missionary to Japan.

Tenpenny opened her home three years ago when the church was asked to host Japanese students for three weeks in a university partnership program.

When the students left, Tenpenny wrote every Southern Baptist missionary in the Tokyo area to ask them to follow up with a ministry to the students. Hixson, who received a letter from Tenpenny, was impressed with her interest.

"It was so great that she took the time to write us. So many Japanese have Christian experiences while in the United States and we don't know about it when they return to Japan," Hixson said.

When the two started corresponding three years ago, they didn't know that furlough plans for Florida would crumble

at the last minute and the Hixsons would wind up in Morristown instead.

The missionary residence of Manley Church was available when the Hixsons needed it.

The Hixsons will return to Japan in January. In the year they have been together, Tenpenny and Hixson have shared ideas about student ministry and international student work.

Tenpenny plans to use the relationship as a foundation for sending students from Morristown to Japan for a missions project.

"All this has opened many doors for us. We can do more for international student work both here and in Japan with us working together," Tenpenny said.

Win the world with prayer

By Linda Rice

As missionaries and national believers in Uganda we know something about weapons and wars. It has to do with eight changes of government since 1979.

Pastor Deo Mawano thought he'd been shot in the head early one morning as he walked to work. Actually, it was only the noise and vibrations of a mortar being fired over his head. That same mortar made waves in our water bed.

I have faced four AK47 automatic guns pointed at me through my windshield. Quickly recognizing my vulnerability and their intention to steal my car, I got out and gave it to them. Weapons and wars — we have experienced them.

"Pray That All May Hear" is the theme for this year's Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions, November 29-December 6. I recognize that, too. It is a call to arms — a cry for the battle to intensify. It is a warfare that is far more significant than Uganda's coups, using weapons that are far more powerful than any AK47 or mortar.

"For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God," (2 Corinthians 10:4-5 NAS). The 1987 Week of Prayer then is right on target.

Prayer is our weapon; we all need to assent to that. But, what do we do with it? We are meticulous in assembling and disassembling it for the purpose of cleaning and polishing. Strategic arms talks are given quality time and resources.

But how often do we actually fire the weapon?



That All May Hear

Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions
Nov. 29—Dec. 6, 1987

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
National Goal: \$75 million

And when we do fire — at times with the wrong ammunition — we expend its power on lesser skirmishes. The enemy is good at setting out decoys and distractions to deflect and diminish the full potential of our weapons. Pray that all may hear!

In Uganda we know something about spiritual weapons and warfare. Kampala Baptist Church members with a thousand and one other needs spend nights in fervent prayer for spiritual awakening. They have been watching as attendance and giving dramatically increases, looking as a weeping woman came for salvation before a sermon was even preached, rejoicing as the church moved back on course — dead center on exalting Jesus. Victory comes through prayer.

The Lango Baptist Association pastors say they have won the victory. They've learned how to deal with witchcraft, an enemy so ugly and potent that it killed four children of a deacon. This was before the deacon's wife was saved and before the believers learned to effectively wield the weapon of prayer. Their freedom from this bondage is noticed in the district. Pray that all may hear!

Most of the world is in spiritual bondage. Many are in countries closed to the gospel. Famine, disease, oppression, and wars cut time short. But our weapon — prayer — is long range and able to penetrate any bondage. It requires no further testing or refining. It needs only to be aimed and used. Pray that the mystery of the gospel be made known with boldness.

Our daughter Kristen sings, "My God is so big, so strong, and so mighty, there is nothing He cannot do." But He waits for His people to pray to release His power.

Pastor Mawano speaks of the time when we come to the end of the war and all gather for the victory celebration. He wonders, as we turn in our battle fatigues and armor, how many of us will hear, "What! This weapon has never been fired. Where have you been?"

Let us set out, as Joshua did (5:13-15), to see the captain of the hosts of the Lord. Let us like him fall down on our faces in worship, submission, holiness, and intercession. Then the walls of many Jerichos around the world will fall.

Linda Rice has been a Southern Baptist missionary to Uganda since 1974.



HIGHWAY MARKER — Virginia Baptists gathered in November to dedicate a highway marker honoring Southern Baptists' most famous missionary, Lottie Moon. The marker, located beside the Crewe, Va., cemetery where Moon is buried, is unveiled by Presley and Gladys Thompson, who were instrumental in having the highway department place the marker. The Thompsons are members of Crewe Church, where she is director of the Woman's Missionary Union.

Also priesthood of believers

Maryland/Delaware affirms SEBTS

NEWARK, Del. (BP) — Maryland/Delaware Baptists overwhelmingly approved resolutions affirming the priesthood of believers and the current administration and faculty of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary during their 152nd annual session Nov. 9-11 in Newark, Del.

Messengers voted 361-111 to substitute a resolution affirming the right of private interpretation of the Bible and the Baptist Faith and Message statement for a proposed resolution coming from the convention's Resolutions Committee. The proposed resolution, presented by majority vote of the five-member committee, asked messengers and convention staff voluntarily to affirm adherence to the doctrinal statement approved by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963.

That resolution invoked the spirit of the Southern Baptist Convention Peace Committee request that SBC agencies reaffirm their commitment to the Baptist Faith and Message. The resolution asked "that we as messengers of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware reaffirm our belief in and adherence to the Baptist Faith and Message" and "that we recommend that the leadership of our

state convention reaffirm their belief in the Baptist Faith and Message."

The substitute resolution, which messengers approved by secret ballot, offered by Homer Carter, pastor of First Church, Rockville, Md. read: "Be it resolved that we affirm the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers and recognize the right of each believer to interpret the Baptist Faith and Message and the Bible for himself or herself under the lordship of Christ and by illumination of the Holy Spirit."

Later in the convention the resolutions committee, again by majority vote, presented to messengers the resolution affirming Southeastern and asking the seminary community and trustees of the Wake Forest, N.C., school to "reach reconciliation and maintain the rich Baptist heritage and tradition that has been a part of Southeastern's heritage and tradition." Following debate, messengers adopted the resolution by show of hands.

Debate over resolutions sparked the only controversy in an otherwise placid meeting. A registration of 793 messengers, large by Maryland/Delaware standards, was attributed to speculation that an organization of conservative Baptists in the two-state convention might challenge the incumbent president for a traditional second term.

However, David Flumbaum, a layman from Middle River Church, Baltimore, was re-elected by acclamation. Other officers are Gleaton Rickenbaker, pastor of First Church, St. Charles, Md., first vice-

Louisiana sets standstill budget

MONROE, La. (BP) — Louisiana Baptists elected a new president and adopted a standstill budget during their 140th convention in Monroe.

Calvin Phelps, pastor of First Church of Winnfield, was elected president by a vote of 480-436 over the only other nominee, Fred Lowery, pastor of First Church of Bossier City.

A letter written by Jim Richards of Greenacres Baptist Church in Bastrop was circulated about a week prior to the convention, urging churches to send their legal contingent of messengers to the meeting to support Lowery.

Richards said the letter was "not a political movement" and was something Baptist ministers frequently did before a convention election. But during a press conference, Phelps, a native of Jackson, Miss., said, "It (the letter) was not terribly offensive, but it is the kind of thing unprecedented as far as the family spirit of the Louisiana Baptist Convention."

The 1988 budget of \$15,604,000 is identical to the current budget with the exception of a 0.25 percent distribution change, from 34.50 to 34.75, going to the Southern

Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget. The change was effected by rearranging other budget items.

Other convention officers elected are Everett Geis, pastor of First Church of Delhi, first vice-president; and Carl Voda, an Alexandria layman and member of Horseshoe Drive Church, second vice-president.

No major doctrinal or theological issues were debated during convention sessions.

Madison-Chester sets five-year strategies

A five-year strategy planning report and a mission project in Michigan was adopted by the Madison-Chester Association of Baptists during the annual meeting in October.

The messengers assembled for the two-day meeting in Jackson at Meridian Church and North Jackson Church.

The strategy planning report included changing the titles of the director of missions to executive director and the associate director of missions to director of education and promotion. It also updated the constitution and bylaws. Committees that developed the report were evangelism, new work, organization of association, social ministries, strengthening churches, and fellowship and communication.

The Michigan project is to raise money to support mission work in the Okemos area of Lansing, Mich.

Ron Davis, pastor of Bethel Church in Henderson, was elected moderator, succeeding Alvin Gilliland, associate pastor of Calvary Church in Jackson. Other officers are John Wayne Williams, a member of Wards Grove Church in Lexington, assistant moderator; and Sheri Barden, a member of West Jackson Church in Jackson, treasurer/clerk.

Herbert Higdon is the executive director and the Oct. 24-25, 1988, meeting will be at Pleasant Hill Church in Jackson and First Church in Bemis.

president; and Mary Strauss, member of Paramount Church, Hagerstown, Md., second vice-president.

Riverside gathers in 100th session

The 100th annual meeting of Riverside Baptist Association featured Tom Madden, Tennessee Baptist Convention executive secretary-treasurer, and included a presentation to Clarence Stewart, TBC foreign mission ministries consultant.

Madden delivered a message at the October meeting which was held at First Church in Byrdstown and First Church in Rickman.

Stewart, a former pastor of the association's First Church in Livingston, was given a plaque noting his service in the Tennessee/Venezuela Partnership.

The officers elected are Mike Madewell, pastor of First Church in Byrdstown, moderator; Damon Corley, pastor of First Church in Celina, assistant moderator; Oblo Cantrell, a member of First Church in Livingston, treasurer; and Steven Sherlin, pastor of Etter Church in Byrdstown, clerk.

The Oct. 20-21, 1988, meeting will be at Allons Church in Allons and West Fentress Church in Jamestown. Terry Geren is the director of missions.

Western District seeks SBC peace

A resolution seeking peace in the Southern Baptist Convention was passed at the 165th annual session of Western District Baptist Association assembled Oct. 22-23 at Springville Church in Springville and Puryear Church in Puryear.

The resolution sought peace "so that missions and evangelism may return as our first priority."

The moderator, Malcolm Norton, pastor of North Fork Church in Puryear, was re-elected. Other officers for the next year are Al Gossett, pastor of Fairview Church in Paris, assistant moderator; Charles Conger, a member of First Church in Paris, treasurer; and Cherri Williams, a member of Temple Church in Paris, clerk.

Bill H. Smith is the director of missions and the next meeting will be Oct. 20-21, 1988, at Union Friendship Church in Henry and West Paris Church in Paris.

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PEW GRANT — Carson-Newman President Cordell Maddox (center) reviews plans for an annex to the college's Dougherty Science Center with Academic Dean Roy Dobyns (left) and Edward Freels, chairman of the natural science and mathematics division. C-N received a \$500,000 grant for enhancements to the school's science facilities.

C-N receives \$500,000 grant

JEFFERSON CITY — Carson-Newman has received a \$500,000 grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts of Philadelphia, Pa., according to C-N President Cordell Maddox.

The funds, which were awarded out of The Mabel Pew Myrin Trust, will be used to upgrade the college's science facilities. C-N received the grant in response to a proposal to build a \$360,000 annex to Dougherty Science Center and to purchase additional equipment for the science complex.

The college's proposal calls for a one-story annex to be built to house a main-frame computer, a microcomputer lab, and other computer facilities for the sciences which are currently located on the ground floor of the Dougherty complex. Creation of the annex will result in more lab and classroom space for physics, chemistry, mathematics, and biology.

According to Maddox, \$140,000 of the grant will be used to purchase additional state-of-the-art equipment for use in the college's division of sciences.

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Bledsoe adopts largest budget

Messengers of the Bledsoe Baptist Association adopted the largest budget ever and heard a message by Jerry

Oakley, president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and pastor of Springfield Church in Springfield, at their fall meeting.

The association also voted to provide the Southern Baptist Expanded Annuity Plan for the director of missions, J. C. Lewis.

The meeting was held Oct. 15 at First Church in Portland. Reports and messages supported the theme, "Enlarge ... Lengthen ... Strengthen ..." based on Isaiah 54:2. It also was reported that the association received receipts over the 1986-87 budget.

The officers, who were elected in earlier 1987 meetings, include Jim Growden, pastor of First Church in Hartsville, moderator, succeeding Larry Gilmore, pastor of College Heights Church in Gallatin; J. C. Bigbee, pastor of Oak Street Mission in Portland, vice-moderator; Jack Goodwin, pastor of Indian Hills Church in Gallatin, treasurer; and Carol Growden, church secretary at First Church in Hartsville, clerk.

Lewis reported that the 1988 meetings will be April 21 at Indian Hills Church in Gallatin, and Oct. 20 at First Church in Lafayette.

Penn-South Jersey welcomes Williams

WRIGHTSTOWN, N.J. (BP) — Almost 300 Pennsylvania-South Jersey Baptists met for their 17th annual session and welcomed a new executive director Nov. 5-6 at First Church in Wrightstown, N.J.

Wallace A. C. Williams, who began Nov. 1 as executive director-treasurer, was given a standing ovation of welcome. He came to the position after 13 years as pastor in Connecticut and northern New Jersey.

The convention adopted a \$1,915,090 budget. Of that amount, \$162,438 will go to world mission causes through the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program budget.

Dan Crow, pastor of Pittsburgh Church in Pittsburgh, was elected convention president. Other officers are James Nunn, pastor of Hickory Church in Sharpville, Pa., first vice-president, and Lee Bolton, pastor of Berkshire Church of Reading, Pa., second vice-president.

Allen Bates accepts Pleasant View call

Pleasant View Church in Talbott has called Allen Bates as pastor.

Beginning the Talbott pastorate Nov. 15, Bates has served in churches in South Carolina and Georgia. He has also served with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta.

Active in the state and associational levels of denominational work, Bates was graduated from Furman University in Greenville, S.C., and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

Wyoming convention experiences revival

CASPER, Wyo. (BP) — A revival atmosphere in which several people made public decisions highlighted the annual meeting of the Wyoming Baptist Convention, the newest such group in the Southern Baptist Convention.

In business sessions, messengers elected Don Hayhurst, pastor of Hillcrest Church in Roverton, as president, and adopted an \$879,000 budget for 1988, of which \$270,000 will come from the 66 churches and 20 missions affiliated with the convention. Of the Wyoming gifts 23.5 percent will be sent to Southern Baptist Convention causes.

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Building brings victories or stress, uncertainty

By Jim Lowry

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)— Even though pastor and people often flinch in dreadful anticipation, church building programs do not have to be synonymous with congregational conflict, church leaders familiar with building programs maintained.

Jim Henry, pastor of First Church of Orlando, Fla., former pastor of Two Rivers Church, Nashville, and a veteran of building programs in several churches, is convinced building new churches can result in victory and unity instead of ruptured fellowship.

Gwenn McCormick, director of the church architecture department at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, said his department works with about 3,500 — 10 percent of all Southern Baptist churches — every year. He believes they now generally are doing a better job of planning and preparation than in years past.

"One of the greatest sources of conflict comes about because personal agendas intrude and become obsessions," McCormick said. "Leaders and congregation need to pray and strive for an openness to the Lord's leadership so they can build bridges of understanding and cooperation."

Keeping church members fully informed probably is the key to success in dealing with matters relating to potential congregational conflict, Henry stressed.

"Communication is the most critical

thing, and prayer is the most important," counseled Henry, who urges pastors to "fully and completely inform people."

In Henry's experiences, a committee first studied the needs of the church, and then church leaders were apprised of progress. Next, "lots of information to look at and think about" was shared with the whole church body, with time for questions.

"As people see needs, most of the time they will rise to the occasion," Henry said. "If they don't understand, they probably won't participate."

At First Church, Orlando, where Sunday School attendance averages about 3,300, a new facility has been built from the ground up, requiring a move from the church's original downtown location. When the process is completed, costs will total more than \$24-million, all on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Building a new facility "doesn't have to have a negative side, because the positives far outweigh the negatives," Henry said. That is not to say, however, that there are not times of doubt, conflict, and searching for answers.

For Henry, the decision to move was, in one way, "the darkest night of my soul," when he realized that some of the church members were going to remain in the old facility. Today, Downtown Baptist Church has about 900 members.

"My pastor's heart wanted to take all the sheep with me," he said. "When that didn't happen, I was disappointed because

I didn't want to leave any one of them. Working through that drove me to more prayer and dependence on God than I ever had before. It also made me realize the strength I receive from the laity, other staff members, and pastors from other churches who reached out to encourage me and our church.

"I found that the Holy Spirit sent manna in the most unexpected ways to meet me when I was at my lowest point," Henry said, "like a letter, or a phone call from people I didn't know. The Lord knew where we were and what we needed."

Henry advised pastors involved in a building program to strive to keep their spiritual lives at their best. And whether people are for or against a new facility, the pastor has got to keep on loving them.

When things look uncertain, stand by biblical principles to achieve stability, he continued. Church members should be challenged to sacrifice and give generously to avoid a financial bondage and great stress on the pastor and staff, which can result in loss of church members.

"It creates stress on the pastor and peo-

ple when the church doesn't have money for ministries, missions, and salaries because it is paying off too much debt," Henry explained. "Stress creates anger, bitterness, resentment, fear, and uncertainty."

"I have been in building programs in rural, suburban, and downtown churches for 27 years." In all those situations, I have seen what a new facility can do in reaching people. I have also seen joy in victory and participated in celebration services when giving goals are reached or we move into a new building. When you come to that victory day, there is a unifying factor.

"There is pain in preparation, and it can be a tough experience," Henry acknowledged. "But in a race, when you cross the finish line, it's worth it. You forget the pain when you see the victory."

"We looked on our building programs as an opportunity to be a blessing for the generations to follow. We charged our committee to look to the future of our children and, their children. That breeds unselfishness and speaks of a commitment that God is on His throne till He calls us home."

"It can be exciting on one hand, or 'Oh me!' on the other," Henry laughed. "For me it is exciting, speaking of progress, blessing, vision, and hope for tomorrow."

Sevier County sets property purchase

Action to purchase property for an associational office building was taken during the annual meeting of Sevier County Baptist Association Oct. 19-21. The meeting was held at Antioch Church, Jones Chapel Church, and Zion Hill Church in Sevierville and at Dupont Church in Seymour.

Joe Wren, pastor of First Church in Sevierville, moderator; and Jack Bailey, pastor of Laurel Grove Church in Sevierville, assistant moderator, were re-elected. Patsy Bradford, a member of Zion Hill Church in Sevierville, was elected treasurer/clerk.

The 1988 meeting will be Oct. 17-18 at Knob Creek Church in Seymour and at Henderson's Chapel Church and First Church, Wear's Valley, in Sevierville. The association's director of missions is Frank Proffitt.

Hartman accepts C-N position

JEFFERSON CITY — John Hartman has joined Carson-Newman College's office of external affairs as Lakeway area media director.

Hartman's duties will include working closely with print, radio, and television media in the Jefferson City-Morristown-Knoxville area. In addition, he will write both for the college's publications and for its nationwide cable television news program on the ACTS network.

Hartman comes to Carson-Newman with over 35 years of experience in communications and information management. Last year he took an early retirement from the Westinghouse Electric Corporation, where he had held a number of posts in public relations, com-

munications, marketing research, and executive support. In his most recent position with Westinghouse, Hartman served as manager of overseas public relations for the company.

During the past year, Hartman co-anchored the evening newscast on LCNC TV-10, the local cable channel operated by the college. He also has served as a part-time faculty member at C-N.

Born in Ohio, Hartman is a graduate of Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio, and also did graduate work at the University of Pittsburgh.



Hartman

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California Baptists keep name

OXNARD, Calif. (BP) — California Baptists defeated a second attempt to change their convention's name and voted to study the doctrinal position and escrow the state convention budget offerings of a controversial San Francisco church during the 47th annual meeting of the Southern Baptist General Convention of California in Oxnard Nov. 10-12.

Convention President John Swartz, pastor of Bethel Church in Escondido, was re-elected without opposition. Other officers are Max Kell, pastor of El Camino Church in Sacramento, first vice-president; Bobby Cain, pastor of Brister Memorial Church in Compton, second

Liquor referendum draws Dyer stand

The messengers of Dyer Baptist Association passed a resolution during its annual meeting opposing the liquor by the drink referendum held Nov. 3 in Dyersburg.

Gathered Oct. 19-20 in Springhill Church and Hawthorne Church in Dyersburg, the association also re-elected its officers. They are William Summers, pastor of First Church in Trimble, moderator; Charles Halliburton, pastor of Finley Church in Finley, assistant moderator; Larry Fowlkes, a member of Fowlkes Church in Fowlkes, treasurer; and Cathy Cavness, a member of First Church in Dyersburg, clerk.

Joe T. Naylor is the director of missions and the next meeting will be at First Church in Newbern and Finley Church in Finley on Oct. 17-18.

Maury recognizes Crosby's service

Maury Baptist Association recognized W. Elmer Crosby, director of missions, during the annual meeting Oct. 22 at Cross Bridges Church and First Church in Columbia. Crosby has served 12 years in that role.

The 1987-88 officers elected at the meeting include Ken Hall, pastor of Friendship Church in Culleoka, moderator, succeeding Gilly Andrews, pastor of Cross Bridges Church; Gary Akins, pastor of Riverview Church in Columbia, vice-moderator; Jean Prince, a member of Rock Springs Church in Columbia, treasurer; and Linda Bass, a member of Pleasant Heights Church in Columbia, clerk.

The next meeting will be Oct. 27, 1988, at Northside Church in Columbia.

World Baptist publishers challenge to excellence

EL PASO, Texas (BP) — Veteran Christian publisher Robert Reekie has warned world Baptists against reducing Christian publishing to a commodity.

"We're doing it faster so we can put twice as much junk on the market," said Reekie, president and co-founder of Media Associates International of Bloomington, Ill.

Reekie spoke to leaders from Baptist publishing houses representing 15 countries and 25 languages who attended the first Southern Baptist foreign missions-related publishing consultation in El Paso, Texas. Christian publishers are likely to fail to communicate because of low content quality rather than the quality of their equipment, he said.

He pointed out the "awesome respon-

vice-president; and Bill Risinger, music minister at Temple Church in Redlands, music director.

The proposed name change — to California Baptist Convention — received a majority of votes, 501 to 442, but the Constitutional change needed a two-thirds percentage. At the 1986 annual meeting in Stockton, where the proposal first was debated, it failed just short at 63.5 percent, 626 to 360.

Jack Long, pastor of First Church of Carlsbad, notified the convention he would present a motion at the 1988 meeting to change the name to California Southern Baptist Convention.

Dolores Street Church in San Francisco, the center of a controversy the past two years over remarks made by its pastor, James Lowder, in allegedly affirming a homosexual lifestyle, will be studied in a motion which originally asked the convention not to accept its Cooperative Program unified budget gifts to the state convention. The convention's Executive Board will study the church and bring a recommendation at next year's meeting.

However, two San Francisco area pastors, unhappy with the referral, successfully urged the convention to escrow the \$2,367 that Dolores Street has given in Cooperative Program funds this year

Illinois adopts new budget

SALEM, Ill. (BP) — Illinois Baptists adopted a general budget of \$6,182,675 and celebrated the 200th anniversary of Baptist preaching in their state during their annual convention Oct. 27-29.

The general budget represents a 3 percent increase over 1987. Messengers also approved budgets of \$947,265 for their Baptist Children's Home program and \$570,096 for the Baptist Student Center, a dormitory complex near Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

Of the \$6.1-million budget, the 980 congregations affiliated with the Illinois Baptist State Association will contribute \$4,662,218, and will send 43.6 percent to support the worldwide missions, education, and evangelism causes of the Southern Baptist Convention, the same as last year.

A proposed amendment to roll back by 2 percent the amount of CP funds which leaves the state was referred to the board of directors for consideration. Gordon Logan, messenger from Halsted Road Baptist Church in Rockford, appealed for the roll back to bolster church extension within Illinois.

Seven hundred thirty messengers and 438 registered visitors were reminded that 200 years ago a Kentucky adventurer

while the study is made.

Richard Neely, pastor of Grand Avenue Church in South San Francisco, and Stephen Cosgrove, pastor of First Church in Pacifica, said the local Baptist association withdrew fellowship from Dolores Street in 1986. Neely said the association found "ample reason" and Bill Gray, a layman from First Southern Church of Anaheim, told messengers the convention needs to "quit passing the buck" on the matter.

James Morton, pastor of Trinity Church in Livermore, warned of setting precedents in escrowing Cooperative Program funds, and John Jackson, pastor of Crescent Church in Anaheim, urged messengers to trust the Executive Board and "not deal with it on this (annual meeting) level."

The motion to escrow the funds was approved 410 to 278.

Messengers approved a 1988 convention budget of \$12,088,000. The budget includes \$5,701,000 to be contributed by California Southern Baptist churches, the same amount as in the 1987 budget.

Of the \$5.7-million contributed by California churches, 28.75 percent — the same percentage as in the 1987 budget — will be channeled to the Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program.

named James Smith first ventured into Illinois to preach the first evangelical message.

Among his converts were James Lemen and Shadrach Bond. Lemen later distinguished himself as an anti-slavery leader. Bond became the first governor of Illinois in 1818.

A resolution on AIDS was among those adopted by messengers. The resolution called AIDS a "worldwide menace" which reaches across all boundaries and brings suffering to all people with the disease, "as well as their families and loved ones."

New River Missionary recognizes driller

During the recent annual meeting of New River Missionary Baptist Association a state Children's Bible Drill participant was recognized and 1987-88 officers were elected.

The meeting was held Oct. 12-13 at New Haven Church and First Church in Oneida, and Antioch Church in Huntsville.

Johnny Thompson, who received a superior rating in the state Children's Bible Drill, demonstrated his skills to the messengers. He is a member of Bethlehem Church in Oneida.

Those elected as new officers are David

sibility" of publishers as gatekeepers of ideas, quoting from 2 Corinthians 2:17 in Today's English Version: "We are not like so many others, who handle God's message as if it were cheap merchandise; but because God has sent us, we speak with sincerity in his presence, as servants of Christ."

The consultation was held at one of the oldest and largest Christian publishing centers. The Baptist Spanish Publishing House was established in El Paso in 1905. The 26 international Baptists and Southern Baptist missionaries who participated heard theories about aging inventories and made recommendations concerning networking, ways of decreasing publication costs and increasing sales, and more extensive distribution and

utilization of Christian literature.

Reekie, who worked with the David C. Cook Foundation for more than 23 years before founding Media Associates, told the group why many Christian publishers find themselves with outdated, inadequate inventories:

- Lack of training for writers, translators, editors, and publishers.

- A disproportionate amount of literature aimed at Christian believers. Only 10 percent of world Christian literature is written for non-Christians, who make up about 70 percent of the world's population.

- Too much religious jargon. Reekie pleaded for Christian publishers to produce more literature on secular subjects written by Christians with an authentic



OUTREACH CENTER — Bill Wage, architect, and Gary Watkins, pastor, are pictured breaking ground for a Christian outreach center for First Church, Collierville. The congregation participated in the ceremony.

Hiwassee Missionary meets in Decatur

While gathered for the annual meeting in Decatur, the messengers of Hiwassee Missionary Baptist Association elected Cecil McDonald, pastor of Old Pond Hill Church in Athens, as moderator. It was held Oct. 23-24 at Peakland Church.

McDonald succeeds Bill Roberts, former pastor of Peakland Church. Other officers elected for the year include Ralph Swafford, pastor of Concord Church in Ten Mile, assistant moderator; Annabell Ogren, a member of Ten Mile Church in Ten Mile, treasurer/clerk; and Debbie Millsaps, also a member of Ten Mile Church, assistant treasurer/clerk.

Concord Church is the site of the Oct. 21-22, 1988, meeting. E. R. Gamble is the director of missions.

Acres, pastor of First Church in Huntsville, moderator, succeeding Carl Jeffers, pastor of Low Gap Church in Robbins; David Shivar, pastor of New Haven Church, assistant moderator; Lucille Stanley, a member of First Church in Oneida, clerk; and Judy Adkins, a member of Bethlehem Church, treasurer.

The director of missions is Dale G. Smith and the 1988 meeting will be Oct. 10-11 at Slick Rock Church in Robbins, Low Gap Church, and Fairview Church in Huntsville.

world view. He mentioned a series produced in Hong Kong to help people find their way around the city using public transportation. The publisher earned the right to be heard by meeting the public's needs and then produced a book in the series about finding the right way for one's personal life through belief in Jesus Christ, he noted.

Conference organizer Alan Compton said one of the most exciting aspects of the meeting was to see publishers looking at publishing needs according to languages and cultures, not geographical boundaries. Compton is a media consultant for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, which works with some 27 publishing ministries worldwide that produce 1,083 periodicals, 1,217 book titles, and 378 tracts.

BIBLE BOOK SERIES

Lesson for Dec. 6

Abraham's dealings

By Marvin P. Nail, pastor
Whitsitt Chapel Baptist Church, Nashville

Basic Passage: Genesis 20:1 to 21:34

Focal Passages: Genesis 20:2-3, 7-9; 21:1-3, 9-13

There are no two people in all the world who are exactly alike. We do find, as in the Bible, that all people share some of the same characteristics. It seems that the more we are different the more we are the same.

So much of it is not only their story but our story as well. On page after page we see pictures of ourselves and our fallen condition.

Unlike many people, I don't take heart in the fact that even great souls like Abraham also have feet of clay. They have their fallen natures too. What does give me heart is that I have the same God loving me who loved and forgave them.

The conflict between Abraham and Abimelech

When we first begin to read this story we get the feeling we've been here before. We have - only the names have been changed. Some have thought this to be just another version of the earlier story about the pharaoh of Egypt.

That assumption is so unnecessary. We only have to look to our own lives. How many times have we done the same dumb things again and again. One of our great tragedies is that we seldom really learn from our mistakes.

Abraham had the same problem. His problem was that he sometimes forgot to trust in his God. God had made great promises to him. Yet he continued to feel it necessary to "help" God out.

In this case as with the episode with pharaoh, God had to intervene to keep the heathen from sin. Abraham, rather than being a consistent witness of faith in God, was again a witness to the contrary.

God does step in to give Abimelech the opportunity to do what is right. God always gives that opportunity. Abimelech heard the warning of God and did what was right.

The story seems to be interrupted at this point but we will carry it through. In the end of the 21st chapter, the two men make a covenant together to live together as friends. This is a beautiful scene. The sad thing is that Abimelech and not Abraham was the initiator.

The conflict between Abraham and Hagar
You've surely heard the prayer: "Lord, give me patience and do it now." This was

certainly not the prayer of Abraham. He had waited over a quarter of a century for the promise of the son.

God had continued to reassure him and he kept waiting patiently. And at last God came through. Isaac was born when Abraham was 100-years-old. The father and mother are very happy. The blessing of God finally came in a very tangible way.

Then Sarah began to fear that her son might not get the full benefit of Abraham's fortune. She sensed, in the presence of Ishmael, a competitor more than a half-brother. Her solution was to kick them out of the household or even the country.

At first Abraham didn't know what to do, then God reminded him of His promise concerning Ishmael. He also reminded him that Hagar and Ishmael were under His care. No matter how much we may care about others, our heavenly Father cares more. Abraham learned that sometimes we reach the limit of our ability and must trust others to God.

God's promise to Hagar

We have no way of knowing Hagar's relationship with God. She had heard and obeyed the voice of God before Ishmael was born. But as a servant in a household she depended on her master to take care of the religion. Now Hagar was being sent out on her own. This time there was no chance of coming back as before.

Not long after she was driven away by Abraham she found herself totally hopeless situation. She and her son were so near death that she left him behind so she wouldn't have to watch him die.

It is an interesting point that the Scripture says that she called on God, but He heard the cries of the child. It reminds us that our prayers are not news to God. He knew of the problem before she prayed.

God reminded her of the promise He had made earlier to her about Ishmael. God's promises are so sure that we may carry on as though they have already come to pass.



Nail

UNIFORM LESSON SERIES

Lesson for Dec. 6

John prepares the way

By Rice A. Pierce
Deacon and Sunday School teacher, Goodlettsville

Basic Passage: Matthew 3:1-12

Focal Passage: Matthew 3:1-12

As early as the second century, Christian churches regarded Matthew the publican, the tax-collector disciple of Jesus, as author of this book. Being placed first in the collection of New Testament books shows its unique nature as a bridge and beginning sequel to the Old Testament Scriptures. Its many Old Testament quotations also show the gospel's close relation to earlier biblical prophecies, especially those related to God's universal plan of redemption for sinful mankind.



Pierce

This book offers a rather full account of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, and seems to have been written mainly for Jewish Christians in helping them see Jesus' truly Jewish roots and His mission to all mankind.

Christ's kingdom proclaimed (Matthew 3:1-2)

The Jewish people increasingly felt that a time of divine deliverance was at hand as spoken of by the prophets (see Isaiah 2:1-4; 11:1-9). But this deliverer was expected to be a military leader who would throw off the Roman yoke. John the Baptist, however, came preaching of a different kind of deliverance. A great change in condition was coming, but it was to be preceded not by arming themselves but by personal repentance. Not a kingdom of the earth, but of heaven, was at hand. The prophetic messenger (Matthew 3:3-6)

Matthew wrote that this prophetic messenger was the one mentioned by Isaiah (40:3). John the Baptist was preparing the way of the King (Christ Jesus), as did workers who leveled and straightened out the road for a stately king to enter the region. John prepared the way for Jesus by urging his hearers to prepare their hearts.

John was, in a sense, the last of the

great Old Testament prophets. He foretold Messiah's coming and announced His presence among men. And what a striking, austere figure he was - truly in the ancient mold of divinely sent spokesmen! John's message gripped the hearts of all the people roundabout the Jordan River. Although they would misunderstand his teaching about Messiah's mission, they did come repenting of their sins and seeking baptism.

A stern message (Matthew 3:7-10)

John noticed many Pharisees and Sadducees, Jewish leaders, also coming for baptism. They wanted to be in on the ground floor of this new "kingdom of heaven," whatever it was. They wanted to be in a position to control any new order as they had controlled the old order.

John knew these arrogant, misleading, false leaders for what they were. They might look and sound pious to the unknowing church members, but John perceived their duplicity and hypocrisy. Believers sooner or later see through ambitious, egotistical, domineering, false leaders. When John saw these power-hungry hypocrites in the crowd, he called them what they were right out before everybody: "O generation of vipers!" - "ye broods of snakes!" John wanted to warn the people of the true nature of these pretending hypocrites.

John challenged these leaders who sought adulation and power rather than kindness and brotherhood to prove their professed piety by actions that showed a right heart (v. 8). Judgment was at hand (v. 10).

A powerful, purifying, Messiah (Matthew 3:11-12)

John, impressive as he sounded, announced that One was coming whose sandals, even, he was not worthy to bear. This One (Jesus Christ) would sift the false from the true as John had said. He would baptize people with the Holy Spirit (for salvation) and with fire (for judgment).

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LIFE AND WORK LESSON SERIES
Lesson for Dec. 6

Growth in Christ

By William F. Northcott, associate pastor
West Jackson Baptist Church, Jackson

Basic Passage: Philippians 3:1-16
Focal Passage: Philippians 3:7-16

Several desperate bodies lay on a street corner in Calcutta. That great saint, Mother Theresa, was busily engaged in ministering to one of the poor souls. As she patiently and lovingly worked with this individual, a passerby asked, "Aren't you upset that you can't get to all the bodies?" She replied, "No, God



Northcott

created us not to be successful, but to be faithful."

Indeed, enough of the modern TV hype from "preachers" who promise prosperity in proportion to faith! God has called us to be faithful to the way regardless of where it leads. If we are on the way, we are in process, and process means growth.

It appears that this is the point Paul makes in this section of Philippians.

Learning how to count
(Philippians 3:7-11)

The tone of Paul's letter to the Chris-

tians at Philippi shifts rather abruptly at the beginning of chapter 3. His words, heretofore characterized by warmth, become the reiteration of a somber warning. "To write the same things again" (v. 1), may be a reference to a previous letter or letters now lost, or could be a loose way of saying that he is putting in writing what he had said to them in person.

In strong language, Paul characterizes the opposition (v. 2), without clearly identifying them. New Testament scholars are divided on this issue. Some understand this group to be Judaizers - Jewish Christians who were adding law to grace. Other scholars maintain that the opposition referred to in Philippians are Jews, unrelated and antagonistic to the church. Whomever they may have been, their confidence was in rites and rituals, and it was against this approach to religious experience that Paul inveighed. As one commentator observes, "His (Paul's) object is to show that men are inwardly

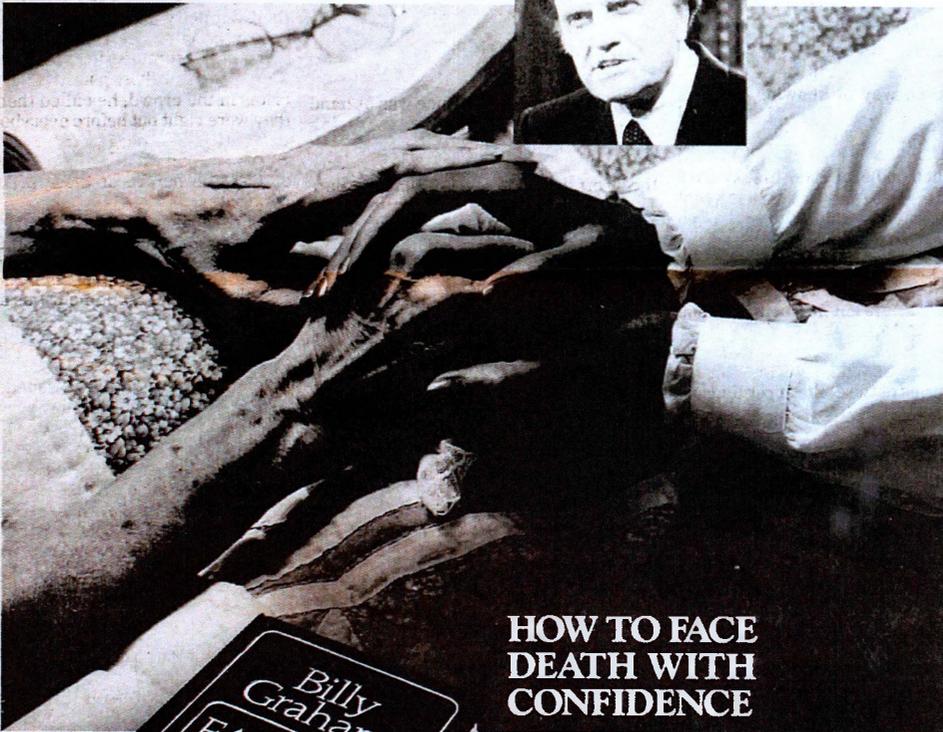
renewed by the Christian message." He pursues this objective by recalling his own experience.

In verses 5 and 6, Paul catalogs his advantages. If birth, breeding, ritual, or religious zeal counted for anything, then Paul was "home free." These things, however, were powerless to satisfy the hunger of his soul. The meaningfulness for which he had searched was finally fulfilled in his knowledge of Christ, in the light of which all things paled in insignificance. One writer compares Paul's experience to that of a "prisoner whose whole interest for years has been in some toy which he has tried to make out of sticks and straws he has found in his dungeon, but which, once he is free, he never thinks of again." Paul is willing to give up all things in order to gain Christ (v. 8) and the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith (v. 9).

In verse 10, Paul connects the knowledge of Christ with the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering. That the resurrection is mentioned before suffering is significant. As one writer observes, "one must rise to new life which Christ has entered, and only then will one be able to suffer with Him."

"There is a fine line between hope and compassionate honesty. Only the wisdom of God can guide us in moments like these. The truth is that all of us have our time to die. Death is total in every generation."

Billy Graham



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Pressing on towards the goal
(Philippians 3:12-16)

In my youth, I cringed whenever I read Matthew 5:48, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (KJV). Although I knew I was a Christian, I knew, too, that I was far from perfect. I have since learned that the Greek word means mature or complete. That's much easier to live with.

Apparently there were some in Paul's day, like in our day, who claimed perfection. Implicit in Paul's discourse in this section is a rebuttal of that view.

Paul is saying that in the Christian race three things are important. They are determination, direction, and destination. All these aspects reflect process and progress. Paul says that he is pressing (determination) toward (direction) the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (destination). Paul's magnificent obsession is to hear the words of his Lord Jesus Christ, "Well done, good and faithful servant: ... enter thou into the joy of the Lord" (Matthew 25:21, KJV).

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Half million refugees face Lebanon's woes

By Art Toalston

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. (BP) — If Lebanon's civil war ended today, it could take 100 years to reunite the nation, a Lebanese Baptist says.

"Maybe a hundred years is too long," says Jean Boucheble, "but it would take a long time, because there has been so much bloodshed." Boucheble is associate pastor of Bikfaya Baptist Church, 20 miles northeast of Beirut.

Well over 100,000 people have been killed, many of them innocent civilians, during nearly 13 years of civil war among so-called Christian, Muslim, and Palestinian political factions.

"We need God's intervention to pull us out of where we are," Boucheble says, adding, Baptists and other evangelicals in Lebanon need the support of fellow believers around the world.

Unfortunately, few people in the West know the depth of Lebanon's crisis, he says, citing newspapers and newscasts he monitored during an October visit to the United States.

"It is a duty of Christians worldwide to protect and assist the church in Lebanon. If the church worldwide does not feel the pain of the church in Lebanon, I think something is wrong. We need to stand before God about how we are going to support brothers and sisters in Christ wherever they are suffering."

Heartache abounds in Lebanon, says Boucheble, who also directs relief work in Lebanon for World Vision International. One-sixth of Lebanon's 3 million people have become refugees. When civil war broke out in 1975, Maronite Catholics, Greek Orthodox, and evangelicals lived throughout the country. Now they are con-



FACING CRISIS — Jean Boucheble, associate pastor of Bikfaya Church near Beirut, lives with crisis and danger every day.

finied to 15 to 20 percent of the land, essentially in the East Beirut area.

"For most of them, there is no hope of returning to their homes anytime soon," Boucheble says. "Other political factions now control those regions. Many had to suddenly leave where they were living and run for their lives. Many are still in a state of shock, unable to believe what has happened to them or adjust to it.

"Many live in one room — parents and

two or three children with husbands or wives and children of their own, 16 or 17 people in one room. I have seen it myself."

The government is in disarray. "The people are living under the law of the jungle," Boucheble says. The economy has collapsed, bringing poverty to many who once were in the middle class. There is no redress for losses due to war or social chaos. There are no social services.

"Every political party is supported from outside, by a different country, so it's not left entirely to the Lebanese people to decide their future," he notes.

One out of three youth in Lebanon have become drug addicts, he says, and other young adults are pulling any strings they can to leave the country.

Somehow, the church is alive and well — and ministering, Boucheble says.

Bikfaya Baptist Church, for example, is helping nearly 400 families from four villages return to homes they abandoned in the midst of heavy shelling. With two-thirds funding from Southern Baptist human needs donations and one-third funding from World Vision, the church is helping repair battle-damaged doors and windows. World Vision also is assisting two other small Baptist congregations with projects to help their communities.

Spiritually, he says, "The Lord is doing a fantastic work. As we learn from the book of Acts, the church grows better under afflictions and difficulties, and that's what is happening in Lebanon. Our churches are full or almost full." Sid Al-Bourshariyeh Baptist Church near Beirut is building a new facility for worship and Bikfaya may do the same.

"Humanly speaking, everybody is emotionally drained," Boucheble says, "but

many of us believe this is where we belong at this time. God is using us.

"Not all Lebanese are turning to the Lord, but we have more people trusting God than in the good days. People who trusted material things and lost them overnight have discovered that they only have God to trust at this difficult time. We have seen people come to the Lord who later couldn't understand why they had been fighting."

Boucheble believes Lebanon's civil war has taught the church a sobering lesson. "This is my personal opinion: I don't think the church in the past was really involved in getting beyond its circle, in carrying the gospel beyond Lebanon. Maybe they had the vision, but not much was done about it, not on the scale with the freedom we had then. I think, now, we realize that we missed an opportunity. We are praying for another opportunity. And I think God is giving us a part of it back, at least within the country."

Ministering in the midst of war — one in which two first cousins have been killed by stray artillery shells — has not sent Boucheble into depression but, he confides, "The least thing has broken me into tears, and many times a day."

Still, "God has given special grace. I'm a person who has learned over the years to get up every morning at 4 or 4:30 to spend time with the Lord. I get my strength from God's promises for me. I know I'm starting a day when I might not come back home — I could be kidnapped or killed in a car accident — or many difficulties might arise. If I had to avoid all the risks, I would stick at home, because just getting out of your home is a risk.

"Even sitting in your home is a risk."

Mozambique Baptists risk lives for hungry

MAPUTO, Mozambique (BP) — Baptists in Mozambique are risking death to deliver farm seed in war zones where people seek safety by hiding at night in the tops of trees.

Members of the small Mozambique Baptist Convention are dodging ambushes to monitor seed and hoe distribution funded by Southern Baptists. They hope villagers will be able to plant and harvest crops before raiders destroy the land.

"There's a war on, and there aren't any rules," said Jim Brock, a first-term missionary from Warrior, Ala., coordinating a relief effort to which Southern Baptists already have released \$585,000. Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board officials say the total could go much higher.

Brock knows only a portion of the 26-pound seed ration that families receive will see harvest. In many places anyone who stays behind to nurture crops will die with them. Several villages Baptists marked to receive seed don't even exist anymore.

"The tactic at the moment is to move in and scorch earth — and that means people, houses, trees, crops and everything," said Brock. "Some areas are being hit as we distribute to them. Some people live in trees at night — and never the same tree twice. They come down in the daytime and try to live."

Statistics from Mozambique show more than 2 million people have been uprooted from their homes, many of them starving, because of a six-year famine intensified by fighting between rebels and government troops.

A plan Brock and the Baptist convention developed with government officials calls for distributing five kinds of seed and one hoe to each of 30,000 families in

three rural farm areas. Areas selected were thought to be safe enough to produce a crop.

In Maputo province around the capital city, about 8,000 families have received Baptist relief. Now war activity seems to be increasing there. In the province of Sofala around the seaport of Beira, about midway up the Indian Ocean coastline, relief arrived late and distribution is just beginning.

Relief efforts in the Gaza province have been severely hampered by warfare. An inability to safely transport seed on roads from Maputo to Gaza has forced Baptists to give much smaller amounts than planned to a broader group of about 20,000 people. Brock suspects a lot of seed in Gaza will be eaten and not planted. "They are literally starving to death up there," he said.

Baptists are evaluating whether to abandon their efforts in Xai-Xai, a Gaza seaport. Although they have no church in the area, they felt people there needed help badly. But airlift is becoming the only safe way to supply seed there.

"A major portion of the population is in transit, fleeing from the war — first from one area, then the war comes there and they flee to another," Brock said. "Some go around and around in circles. Many of them live in areas that are safe in the daytime, but at night you take your chances. And some of them live in the midst of the war. It's not a nice, clear situation where you can make a decision about a place two months ahead of time."

Mozambican government officials have handled most relief transport by armed convoy. In recent attacks, however, trucks have been burned and workers killed. No Baptists died in the attacks, but

Brock is trying to determine whether 13 tons of seed were lost.

In May rebels ambushed a convoy of which Brock was a part. That was the last time he went into the rural area. "I talked about it with the president of the convention and decided if I got hit and knocked out, it could stop our work. The risk is too high," Brock said.

"So I send young men in, and I pray. You don't ask them to go. You say, 'We need someone to go,' and you let someone come forth. You can't really say, 'You go there,' because it's just too much weight to carry. You've got to let them decide on their own if they feel God wants them to go there, because they might not come back."

One village where Baptists distributed seed was hit before the next dawn. A city where Baptists met to discuss a project was hit the next day.

"We've got distribution tomorrow to three different places, and every one of them is hot," Brock said.

It is difficult to determine just what is safe: "These people have been torn by war for so long, that if you ask if a road is safe and the people say, 'Yes,' what it means is there's only five, six, seven people killed along it a week. There aren't that many safe places left."

Brock has been touched by the way Mozambican Baptists have rallied to help relieve suffering. "I'm really proud of them," he said. "They're knocking themselves out. They prayed for years to have some ability to do something for their people.

"A Sunday has not passed by that I have not heard the membership at First Baptist Church in Maputo thank God for Southern Baptists for sending people to

help them. They do not cease to pray. I would ask Southern Baptists to not cease in their prayer for the people here."

When the Baptist World Alliance set aside a day of peace recently for Christians to pray for troubled spots in the world, women at the Maputo church organized an effort to pray for other countries. They are people of faith, Brock said: "They don't have much else. That God gives them another day to live in His service is a very real thing they thank Him for."

Mozambicans inside the country are not the only ones suffering. Starvation is a problem also among displaced Mozambicans spilling into Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Swaziland. Southern Baptist volunteer Richard Cockrum of Afton, Tenn., will begin coordinating relief for them Jan. 1 with missionaries in those countries.

For Brock and his wife, Brenda, who arrived early this year with their 5-year-old daughter, Paige, the most difficult thing about living in Mozambique has been seeing the desperation around them and being powerless to change it.

"It is a stress to see people suffer without hope," Brock said. "We hurt, and we cry, and we pray, and we know this is where we are supposed to be, so we stay. If we didn't know that, then this would not be the place to be.

"The thing that I'm thankful for is that I know when Southern Baptists send their people, they pray for them. Because that is the key to survival in a place like this."

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